

BING

**Spring
2010**



No. 154



THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB CROSBY

THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB CROSBY

*Founded in 1936, the world's longest-running fan club - as recognised by the
Guinness Book of World Records*

OUR MISSION: To perpetuate the memory and the musical legacy of Bing Crosby for the benefit
of future generations

Web sites:

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BING magazine: www.bingmagazine.co.uk

Bing Crosby Enterprises: www.BingCrosby.com

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Membership renewals fall due on 1st. January each year and subscription rates effective for 2010 are:

USA and Canada

US \$25 per annum

UK

£15 per annum

Mainland Europe, including Eire

£16 per annum

Australia and New Zealand

A\$40 per annum

Rest of World

£18 per annum

All remittances should be sent to Michael Crampton in **£ sterling** payable to *The International Club Crosby* with the exception of::

(a) American and Canadian members who should send their remittances in U.S. dollars to F. B. Wiggins

(b) Australian and New Zealand members who should pay David Currington in Australian dollars

Articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to the Magazine Editor or the American Co-Editor.

Other Correspondence concerning membership, non-arrival of the magazine or other aspects of the club's affairs should either be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer or to your local representative please.

BING is the official journal of *The International Club Crosby* and is published in the spring, summer and winter of each year. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material
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EDITORIAL

74th anniversary greetings to all of my fellow ICC associates and members. Whether you choose to call it "twenty-ten" or "two-thousand-ten", we're all faced with a brand new decade, and you are holding the first issue of BING magazine for the 'teens. It's hard to comprehend that 1970, and the decade during which Bing left us, is now forty years ago. Even more amazing is that the 1960's are reaching their demi-centennial. Incredible! This new decade, however, dawns promisingly, with many exciting new projects concerning Bing on the horizon.

The new Johnny Mercer centennial documentary *The Dream's On Me* is available on DVD, along with its companion soundtrack CD. Our own Ken Barnes is credited as writer on this highly recommended definitive video biography of Johnny's life and times. Of course, Bing is prominently featured on both. More on these can be found in this issue.

The American Movie Classics (AMC) channel here in the United States surprised us all with a 24-hour marathon screening of Bing's 1954 film *White Christmas* on Christmas Eve. How wonderful it was that whenever you turned on the television during that day and night, there was Bing, celebrating the Holiday with you! Let's hope AMC makes this an annual occurrence.

By now I'm sure most of you have received your copy of the Mosaic *Bing Crosby: The CBS Radio Recordings, 1954-56* box set of 7 CD's. Many of us have had this Buddy Cole Trio material for a number of years on tapes, with varying degrees of audio quality, but it is nice to have a large helping of it in one convenient place, direct from the master tapes, sounding as crisp and clear as modern technology allows.

Also, by the time you read this, the new Public Broadcasting System (PBS) special *The Legendary Bing Crosby* may have aired on American television, and we welcome your comments and reactions to it. We hope the program gains us many new members and rekindles some positive interest in Bing. We also hope you'll support the exciting new CD and DVD releases on the newly-formed 'Bing Crosby Archive' label, details of which can be found in this issue. Even the most ardent, long-standing Crosby collectors have never heard the album Bing recorded in 1962, *On The Sentimental Side*. Incredible that, almost 50 years after it was recorded, it is finally seeing the light of day!

On a related TV note, Hope Enterprises has made all of Bob Hope's TV shows, from 1950-2003, available on DVD. The shows are complete as aired (some sans commercials, however), from their master kinescopes & video sources. Prices start at \$24.95 per show, so collecting more than a few of them may be a bit costly. Go to www.bobontv.com for more information.

In closing, I must comment on the demise of *Steven Lewis' Bing Crosby Internet Museum* website. For fourteen years, Steven tirelessly devoted himself to maintaining what amounted to the most comprehensive site on the worldwide web devoted to Bing. Regardless



of the circumstances that led to its demise, it is indeed a pity that such a valuable research resource has been extinguished.

And now, to paraphrase Ken Carpenter, here's Malcolm....

Greg Van Beek

The exciting news is of course the string of wonderful releases from Bing Crosby Enterprises to follow the magnificent Mosaic set which we outline in subsequent pages. These represent the most substantial output of Bing material we have seen for some years and to say we are extremely delighted is putting it very mildly indeed. Our sincere thanks go to Robert Bader for everything he has done to make it possible.

On a more sombre side, we have witnessed the closure of the Bing Crosby Internet Museum and of Bing's Friends & Collectors Society in recent months. These are both sad losses to the world of Crosbyana as are the deaths of Crosby stalwarts Bob Neate and Phil Clarke.

This issue is packed with diverse articles covering many aspects of Bing's life. If you can absorb it all in one sitting, you will have done well!

We thank Ernest Sutkowski for our back cover and all the contributors for their interesting articles. Often we tend to overlook the many administrative tasks undertaken by Michael, Wig and David in distributing magazines, CDs and books as well as dealing with letters, phone calls, emails and the club's money. The ICC could not run as smoothly as it does without this hard work and on behalf of all our members I express our gratitude to them for all they do.

Malcolm Macfarlane

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SECRETARY / TREASURER'S REPORT

Bing Crosby left us a rich musical legacy, a considerable proportion of which is now available to us on commercially released CDs or DVDs. However, there are still many films, TV and radio shows, which have not been issued in this form and until the release of the Mosaic set it had seemed unlikely that we would see any extensive release of unissued Bing material from commercial sources. Mosaic has confounded us and they are to be congratulated for bringing us a beautiful package of 1950's Bing. The 160 Bing & Buddy tracks are presented in superb sound, many of which will not have been familiar to those purchasing the box set. I would urge all members to try and obtain this superb set of recordings.

As I write this report in February 2010, around 150 members have not renewed their subscription so Wig and I must once again write to them with a reminder and invite them to stay with us. Fortunately, if previous years appeals are any guide, most will retain their membership and all I would ask is that they remember to renew early next December.

NEW MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to welcome **Regis Philbin** as an honorary member. Greg Van Beek originally approached Regis about joining us some years ago and Carolyn Schneider has now made it a reality for us. Regis never misses an opportunity to talk about Bing and we have been grateful for his support over the years. As reported in BING 137 by Greg, Regis met Bing for the first time on the Joey Bishop Show in 1967 and here's a photo of the event.



I should also like to greet the following new members and in so doing I must apologise to our US friends listed below who were mistakenly cited in the deceased column in the last issue of the magazine! Wig was quick to spot my mistake and he has kindly reassured these new members that we are not in the habit of killing them off as soon as they have joined our ranks. We are grateful for the support of new members and trust that they will come to value their membership of the club.

UNITED STATES

Jerry Hall (Andalusia, Alabama), John Gill (New York, New York), Brad Graham (Madison, Wisconsin), Steve Palmer (Chicago, Illinois), Alan Graser (Staten Island, New York).

UNITED KINGDOM

Arthur Macfarlane (Peterborough, Cambridgeshire), Berni Hemsley (Beckenham, Kent)

DONATIONS

We gratefully acknowledge the beneficent support provided by the following members who head our list of those who have given substantial sums to support the ICC through the coming year:-

Jean Rainey, John Davis, Gerard Hanlon, Paul Hennessey, Frank Startup, John Salisbury, Derek Meaden and Donald Bostock

Giving generously too, are:-

Christine Mann, Harry C Ross, Bob Halls, Ronald Moss, Ian Arnott, Maggie Ryan, Ken Shaw, Tom Sim, Ron Holder, Des Hellier, Derek McNamee, Mike O'Donaghue, Stan Hellens, Arthur Blood, Maurice Heywood, Edgar Lawson, Mr R E Sharp, Chris Hitchcock, Vera Campbell, Michael Tyce, Silvia Lawrence, Roy Irvine, Robert Larkin, Geoffrey L Robinson, June Manton, Geoff White, Norman Jones, Alf Plummer, Frans van der Kolff, Stan Woodford, Tom Wallace, John R Byrd, Klaus Halm, John Bignell, Mrs B A Sellers, Dermot Tallon, Barbara G Holmes, Les Waters, Wally Oldfield, Peter Howard, Frank Challenger, Jack Winegrad, George Patmore, Matthew & Jean Sprott, Bert Bishop, Mr J Cook, Malcolm Macfarlane, John Joyce, Frank Brannigan and Nicholas Morrison.

All donations are welcome and gratefully acknowledged and we owe much to the generosity of our benefactors.

DEATHS

With sadness we draw members' attention to the passing of the following members –

Bob Neate, (Melbourne, Australia), Phil Clarke (Waterlooville, Hampshire), Magnus George Sheraton (Sunderland, Tyne & Wear), Harry Gledhill, (Barnsley, South Yorkshire).

We have a separate obituary for **Bob Neate** who was the co-ordinator for the Australian Bing Crosby Society for over 30 years. **Phil Clarke** was a prodigious Crosby enthusiast who ran the former Southampton Bing Crosby Club for many years. Phil was very supportive of ICC endeavours and he always purchased at least two copies of each item that the ICC released. He had a great collection of musical books and his knowledge and enthusiasm will be missed by his many Crosby friends.

We extend our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Bob, Phil, George and Harry.

BING CROSBY – THROUGH THE YEARS - 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Sepia Records)

These attractive CDs remain available from me with the price for the UK being £6.50 and the price for Europe £7.00. Members in the US & Canada should obtain their copies from Wig Wiggins. The price for members in the rest of the world is £8. Volume 5 will be available shortly and you should order by returning the order form supplied in your magazine.

CROSBY CALENDAR 2010

Ron Bosley's attractive calendar, featuring a mix of superb black and white photographs remains available from me at £6.50 UK and £7.00 for other European destinations. US/Canadian members should contact Wig to obtain their calendars. Members in the rest of the world should order from me at £8. It was nice to see the following tribute on the Bing Crosby (ICC) Facebook page from **Steve Fay**.

THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB CROSBY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31st DECEMBER 2009

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Subscriptions and donations	11417	Production of BING magazine	10753
Sales - Calendars	1905	Calendars	1810
Leeds meeting - receipts	459	AGM (Leeds) costs	408
Sales - Books / back issues	67	Secretarial costs	10
Sales - Sepia CDs	6871	Sepia CDs - costs	4817
Sales - Mosaic sets	1650	Mosaic sets - costs	1964
Sales - Woodbury CDs	704	Woodbury CD costs	298
Sales - Carolyn Schneider books	532	Editorial costs	198
Unpaid cheques charges (refunds)	72	Unpaid cheques charges	85
		Publicity	39
Bank Interest 2009	3	Postage - books/back issues	66
Bank balance 31/12/2008	7545	Bank balance 31/12/2009	10777
	<u>31225</u>		<u>31225</u>

Note:

1. The accounts are a simple unaudited Income and Expenditure summary. Amounts owing and stocks of books and CDs held are not shown. Funds held on a temporary basis by the various international representatives are not shown either.
2. The figures shown for the Sepia and Woodbury CDs have to be viewed against the deficits revealed in last year's accounts for the same items.
3. The receipts from the sale of Carolyn Schneider's book are due to be remitted to her.
4. The club is able to cover its anticipated expenditure in 2010.

Michael Crampton. Secretary/Treasurer

"My unsolicited testimonial: This January was the first time I had ordered a Bing calendar or a "Through the Years" CD, when I sent in my ICC dues. The calendar is amazing! I can hardly believe the quality of the printing. The brilliance and the resolution of those black-and-white stills of Bing with his 1930s and 40s film co-stars practically knock my eyes out. And the audio quality of the CD has to rank among the best CDs of Bing's work I have so far. I want to applaud everyone associated each of those projects. I wish I had gotten off my duff and started ordering both items as soon as I joined ICC! Now I have some catching up to do!"

Sue Horn also commented, adding, "I agree. I get these every year and sometimes send them as stocking stuffers too." **William Torpey** came in too with "It's a one-of-a-kind calendar. I love it."

Ron Bosley is wrestling with some serious health issues as we go to press and our thoughts are with him and his family.

LEEDS 2010

Sunday October 3rd 2010 is the date for your diary

Until summer, my warmest greetings to all members.

Michael Crampton

ROBERT (BOB) NEATE

Ken Henderson sends this tribute to Bob who died on February 20 at the age of 85 from the effects of a brain tumour.

I have known Bob Neate at least since we started the reforming of an Australian Bing Crosby Club in 1977 just before Bing died so suddenly at that time. Bob had roles of President and Secretary of the Victorian Bing Crosby Club. Until he died Bob Machliss had held the role of president. Bob was also a keen Al Bowlly and British Dance Band collector and he, together with Ken Boness, had a community radio show playing Bing records.

Bob loved cricket, Australian Rules football and tennis. He played all of these and was still playing tennis until comparatively recently. Bob had at least one major league football game around the end of WW2. He worked for many years in a shipping department of a company and had phone contact with a man called Alan Roper at Beaufort Shipping, part of P&O. Through conversation it turned out they had like interests in Al Bowlly. A friendship developed and Bob often went to Alan's home to have a cuppa and listen to recordings or videos of like interest.

Bob was a devoted husband to Loris and a loving father to their seven children. Some of the children ventured to London like we all did in those days. He was a pillar of his church, an excellent pianist and lover of all types of music. He was himself a fine tenor, a choir member and choir leader. Bob lived in a leafy, rustic suburb of Melbourne, Blackburn where he had lots of British Dance bands CDs piled high.

Bob Neate was a fair man and always had a keen ear

to listen to what you had to say and offer advice. He would call at my house from time to time to deliver a new Bing CD and collect my money and we would chat outside beside his car. And we would talk on the phone. Often he brought Adrian Fowler, another club member, with him for a drive and we had a ball talking about old times until Adrian died some few years ago.



Bob with Australian club newsletter editor, Josie Conway.

We shall all miss Bob and all he did for the Crosby cause in Australia. Our sincere condolences go to him and his family and friends.

Ken Henderson

We were delighted to see this announcement by Bing Crosby Enterprises.

THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY

With his smooth voice and easy-going style, legendary performer Bing Crosby crooned his way into the hearts of fellow celebrities and fans around the world. His prolific talent across multiple entertainment platforms earned him three Academy Award nominations and one Oscar, 38 Number One hits, numerous gold and platinum records, and countless other honors. Now, fans will delight in the release of a new public television special devoted to the iconic entertainer, *THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY*, set to premiere February 2010 (check local listings). Produced and directed by Emmy and Grammy nominee John Scheinfeld, the program presents many of the entertainer's most memorable performances from his classic network specials, which aired from 1954 to 1977, including recently discovered, digitally restored footage and clips that have not been seen since their original broadcast.

The program seamlessly blends full-song solo performances and duets with enlightening interviews with Bing's wife, Kathryn, daughter, Mary, film critic Leonard Maltin, television personality Regis Philbin, music legend Andy Williams, and performer / musicologist Michael Feinstein. Their commentary provides intimate insight into the life and career of

Crosby, while the noteworthy collection of clips capture this timeless entertainer at his best ... singing, dancing, and joking around on stage.

Enjoy Crosby's enduring solos - including "I Love Paris," "Swanee," "Ol Man River," and "It Had to Be You" - and reminisce about the golden days of Hollywood with unforgettable performances featuring Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Fred Astaire, Andy Williams and more. Songs range from popular jazz standards to classic holiday numbers, including a famous collaboration with rock star David Bowie on "The Little Drummer Boy." All of the performances are filled with Crosby's trademark charm, effortless grace, and versatile talent.

Check with your local PBS station for dates and times!

Editor: Just what we have been waiting for! The programme has been made available to all PBS stations for their March/April pledge drives. As we went to press, we knew that the PBS stations in Las Vegas, New Jersey and Milwaukee were showing the program but possibly not all PBS locations will be able to pick it up straightaway. The programme is part of a package being distributed by APT and it's apparently a little expensive for some stations. Hopefully the remaining PBS outlets will show it later in the year, perhaps to tie in with Bing's birth, his passing or during the holiday period in November / December. If your PBS station hasn't shown it, please encourage them to do so. Carolyn Schneider will be a guest on the Las Vegas programme. The affair will feature a DVD - including 35 minutes of material not seen in the broadcast - available only to viewers who donate money and a new CD entitled "Bing Sings the Great American Songbook". The CD will eventually (after September 1) also be marketed commercially by the mail order firm Collectors' Choice Music. This is what is in the actual TV broadcast.

ACT 1

"I Love Paris" (Bing solo) - "Swanee" (Bing solo) - "Ol' Man River" (Bing solo) - Medley (using special effect showing three Bings - "Pennies from Heaven" - "June in January" - "I'm an Old Cowhand" - "Play a Simple Melody") - "Now You Has Jazz" (with Louis Armstrong)

ACT 2

"Mama Don't Allow It" (with Jose Feliciano) - "Married" (with Carol Burnett) - "It Had to Be You" (Bing solo) - "I Believe in You" (with Bob Hope) - "The Oldest Established" (with Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin)

ACT 3

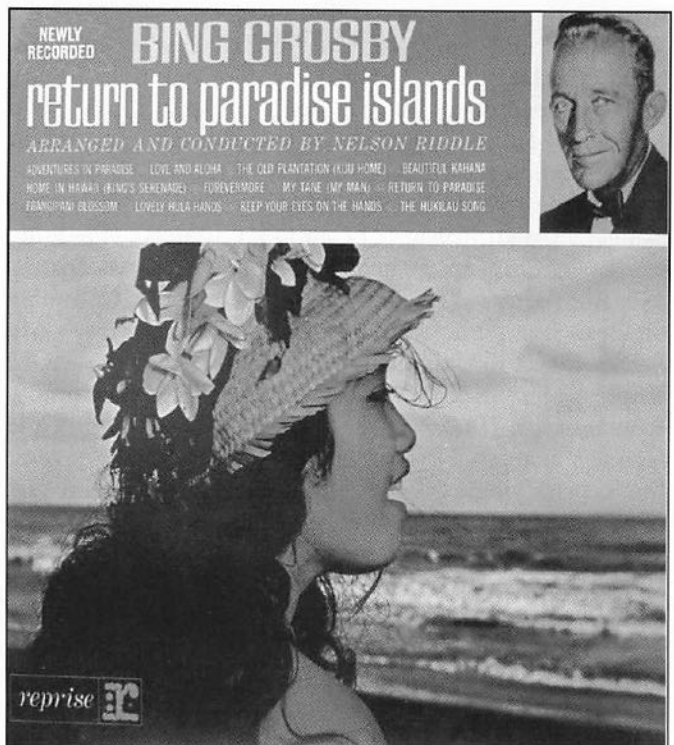
"Sing" (with Fred Astaire) - "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral" (Bing sings to Regis Philbin) - "Pennies from Heaven" (Regis sings to Bing) - "Swingin' on a Star" (with Andy Williams) - "Where the Blue of the Night" (Bing solo) - "The Little Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth" (with David Bowie) - "White Christmas" (three clips of Bing at different points in career)

(Well, we were excited enough about this but then came the next incredible news from Bing Crosby Enterprises!)

BING CROSBY ARCHIVE CDs AND DVDs SET FOR SPRING 2010 RELEASE

Collectors' Choice Music and Bing Crosby Enterprises, in association with HLC Properties, Ltd., are pleased to announce **THE BING CROSBY ARCHIVE** series of CDs and DVDs.

The inaugural release will include classic Crosby albums issued on CD for the first time, including Bing's final recording, *Seasons* from 1977, 1964's *Return to Paradise Islands* with Nelson Riddle, 1960's *El Senor Bing* with Billy May, and the never-before-issued 1962 album *On the Sentimental Side*. In addition, this release includes TWO brand-new, never-before-available compilations of Bing Crosby material: *Bing on Broadway* and the double-CD, *So Rare: Treasures from the Crosby Archive*. These CDs have been remastered from original sources, and *Return to Paradise Islands* has been remixed from the multi-track master tapes. *On the Sentimental Side* has also been newly mixed from the multi-track tapes but had never been mixed before. *El Senor Bing* includes a previously unreleased alternate mono mix of the album.



The inaugural DVD release in The Bing Crosby Archive series is a 2-DVD set: *Bing Crosby: The Television Specials - Volume 1*. This box set features four shows meticulously restored from original film and videotape masters: Bing's debut TV special from January 3, 1954 (with Jack Benny); his September 29, 1959 special (with Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee and Louis Armstrong); his May 14, 1962 special (with Bob Hope, Edie Adams and the Smothers Brothers); and his April 13, 1970 special *Cooling It* (with Dean Martin, Flip Wilson and Bernadette Peters). The collection also

includes bonus features, such as rare interviews, short films and commercials featuring Bing Crosby.

(Editor: Wow! Gosh! Goodness me! And any other exclamation you might care to use! Robert Bader of Bing Crosby Enterprises has done a wonderful job in getting all this material out. First the Mosaic set and now all this. Robert stresses that the Collectors' Choice material will be available for some time as he realises all of this output would be rather expensive for our members if they had to buy it all at once. The Collectors' Choice web site released this information as we went to press:

So Rare: Treasures From The Crosby Archive - \$21.98

Carefully compiled by Crosby archivist Robert S. Bader, this career-spanning collection of rare and unusual recordings from Bing Crosby's personal archive includes his first solo radio performance from 1931, some rare private recordings and unknown outtakes as well as the first album appearances of several rare single tracks—many of which are mixed in stereo for the first time!

Includes 'Just One More Chance' and 'I'm Through with Love' from *Fifteen Minutes with Bing Crosby*; 'Buckin' the Wind' from a Spanish radio promo disc; 'Where the Turf Meets the Surf', Del Mar race track's theme song; Kraft Music Hall performances of 'Over the Rainbow' and 'As Time Goes By'; 'You're the Gem State Wonder, Idaho'; 'Santa Claus Is Coming to Town', a 1954 recording for Shriner's Hospital; 'My Old Kentucky Home', recorded for the Kentucky Junior Derby; radio performances of 'I Wonder What's Become of Rover'; 'We're in the Money (The Goldigger's Song)'; 'I Hear Music'; 'I Can't Get Started'; 'Pledging My Love'; 'Because', and 'The Yellow Rose of Texas'; 'So Rare' from The Ford Road Show; the Columbia singles 'Straight down the Middle' and 'Tomorrow's My Lucky Day'; first-time stereo appearances of the MGM singles 'The Second Time Around' and 'Incurably Romantic'; a 1960 private recording of 'Anthem of the Clams'; a stereo TV outtake of 'Pennies from Heaven'; the Reprise singles 'Far From Home'; 'How Green Was My Valley'; 'Step to the Rear', and 'What Do We Do with The World'; Reprise outtakes of 'Live a Little' and 'Don't Let a Good Thing Get Away'; the unreleased singles 'Take a Longer Look' and 'The Human Race', and 'That's What Life Is All About' live from the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on March 17, 1976. 34 tracks, 26 unreleased!

Full Track Listing

1. Just One More Chance 2. Bing talks about his first radio show 3. I'm Through with Love 4. Buckin' the Wind 5. Where the Turf Meets the Surf 6. Over the Rainbow 7 As Time Goes By 8. I'll Be Seeing You (BBC 1944) 9. Why Don't You Fall in Love with Me? (KMH 1942) 10. You're the Gem State Wonder, Idaho 11. Santa Claus is Coming to Town 12. What Do You Mean, You Lost Your Dog? 13-14. We're in the Money (The Goldiggers' Song) 15. I Hear Music 16. I Can't Get Started 17. Because 18. Bing talks about rock 'n' roll 19. Pledging My Love 20. The Yellow Rose of Texas 21-22. Bing's message to the Kentucky Junior Derby / My Old Kentucky Home 23. So Rare 24. Straight Down the Middle 25.

Tomorrow's My Lucky Day 26. The Second Time Around 27. Incurably Romantic 28. Anthem of the Clams 29. Pennies from Heaven 30. Far from Home 31. How Green Was My Valley 32. Step to the Rear 33. Live a Little 34. Don't Let a Good Thing Get Away 35. What Do We Do with the World 36. The Human Race 37. Take a Longer Look 38. That's What Life Is All About

(Editor: There are so many items that deserve specific comment and I'll leave most of that to Ken Crossland in our next issue. The previously unknown tracks 36 and 37 are not those used in the Goldilocks presentation but are separately recorded versions from February 19, 1970 for possible commercial release. The unissued Reprise tracks are another bonus too.)

Bing On Broadway - \$11.98

When it came to interpreting show tunes, Bing had few peers. This brand-new collection of all unreleased material features him singing selections from such legendary Broadway musicals as 'South Pacific, The Pajama Game, Damn Yankees, Can-Can, Anything Goes, My Fair Lady' and many others, accompanied by Buddy Cole & His Trio on 17 tracks and John Scott Trotter on two tracks. Includes 'Swanee; Carolina in the Morning; Mandy; How Long Has This Been Going On?; My Heart Stood Still; Crazy Rhythm; Ain't Misbehavin'; Fine and Dandy; But Not for Me; New Sun in the Sky; Taking a Chance on Love; It's Only a Paper Moon; All Through the Night; Come Rain or Come Shine; A Cockeyed Optimist; It's All Right with Me; Hey There; Heart', and 'Get Me to the Church on Time'.

Full Track Listing

1. Swanee 2. Mandy 3. Carolina in the Morning 4. How Long Has This Been Going On? 5. My Heart Stood Still 6. Crazy Rhythm 7. Ain't Misbehavin' 8. Fine and Dandy 9. But Not for Me 10. New Sun in the Sky 11. It's Only a Paper Moon 12. All Through the Night 13. Taking a Chance on Love 14. Come Rain or Come Shine 15. A Cockeyed Optimist 16. It's All Right with Me 17. Hey There 18. Heart 19. Get Me to the Church on Time

El Senor Bing (Deluxe Edition) - \$11.98

Bing loved Spanish music, and for this 1960 collection, recorded for his own Project label, he was accompanied by none other than the Billy May Orchestra—CD debut! Includes from the original album 'Ramona/Amapola (Pretty Little Poppy); Marta/The Rose in Her Hair; Again/Allez-Vous-En (Go Away); In the Still of the Night/I Could Have Danced All Night; Pagan Love Song/Cuban Love Song; Down Argentine Way/What a Difference a Day Made; Heavenly Night (Cielito Lindo)/My Shawl; Malaguena (At the Crossroads)/Andalucia (The Breeze and I); How High the Moon/Old Devil Moon', and 'C'est Magnifique/Taking a Chance on Love'. We've also added six Spanish-flavored bonus tracks from Bing's 1950s CBS radio sessions with Buddy Cole & His Trio including 'Papa Loves Mambo; Floras Negras; Solamente Una Vez; No Te Importe Saber (Let Me Love You Tonight); La Borrachita', and 'In A Little Spanish Town'. 'Muy sabroso!'

Full Track Listing

In the Still of the Night / I Could Have Danced All Night - C'est Magnifique / Taking a Chance on Love - Heavenly Night (Cielito Lindo) / My Shawl - Marta / The Rose in Her Hair - How High the Moon / Old Devil Moon - Pagan Love Song / Cuban Love Song - Ramona / Amapola (Pretty Little Poppy) - Malaguena (at the Crossroads) / Andalucia (The Breeze and I) - Down Argentine Way / What a Difference A Day Made - Again / Allez-Vous-En (Go Away) - Ramona / Amapola (Pretty Little Poppy) [mono] - Marta / The Rose in Her Hair [mono] - Again / Allez-Vous-En (Go Away) [mono] - In the Still of the Night / I Could Have Danced All Night [mono] - Pagan Love Song / Cuban Love Song [mono] - Down Argentine Way / What a Difference a Day Made [mono] - Heavenly Night (Cielito Lindo) / My Shawl [mono] - Malaguena (at the Crossroads) / Andalucia (The Breeze and I) [mono] - How High the Moon / Old Devil Moon [mono] - C'est Magnifique / Taking a Chance on Love [mono] - Papa Loves Mambo - Solamente Una Vez (You Belong to My Heart) - La Borrachita (I'll Never Love Again) - Flores Negras (You're the Moment of a Lifetime) - No Te Importe Saber (Let Me Love You Tonight) - In a Little Spanish Town

(Editor: Interesting to have a separate mono version of the whole El Senor Bing album too.)

On The Sentimental Side (Deluxe Edition) - \$11.98

Recorded in 1962 and never released, this collection of popular songs, many dating back to Bing's boyhood, has been long rumored to exist by Crosby fans, and finally appears here with five bonus tracks! The original album is all medleys: 'My Bonnie/The Band Played On; Always/Wishing; Remember/Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet; All Alone/In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree; How Can I Leave Thee/A Bird In a Gilded Cage/The Sidewalks of New York; If I Didn't Care/Blueberry Hill; Beautiful Dreamer/The Last Rose of Summer; Roll On Silver Moon/Now the Day Is Over; Tom Dooley/The Old Gray Mare; Together/What'll I Do; Look For the Silver Lining/Say It With Music', and 'Did You Ever See a Dream Walking/A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody'. The bonus tracks hail from Bing's 1950s CBS radio shows with Buddy Cole; they include 'Because; Love's Old Sweet Song; Smilin' Through; Whither Thou Goest', and a 1960 take of 'Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral'!

Full Track Listing

My Bonnie / The Band Played On - Always / Wishing - Remember / Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet - All Alone / In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree - How Can I Leave Thee / A Bird in a Gilded Cage / The Sidewalks of New York - If I Didn't Care / Blueberry Hill - Beautiful Dreamer / The Last Rose of Summer - Roll on Silver Moon / Now the Day Is Over - Tom Dooley / The Old Gray Mare - Together / What'll I Do - Look for the Silver Lining / Say It With Music - Did You Ever See a Dream Walking / A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody - Because - Love's Old Sweet Song - Smilin' Through - Whither Thou Goest - Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral

Return To Paradise Islands (Deluxe Edition) - \$11.98

Bing's collection of Hawaiian favorites was recorded in 1963 by Frank Sinatra's Reprise label and has never been available on CD or even reissued at all! And for this edition a new stereo mix has been created from the original session tapes that is simply, well, paradisaical. Bing is accompanied by the Nelson Riddle Orchestra on 'Keep Your Eyes on the Hands; Forevermore; Love and Aloha; Beautiful Kahana; The Hukilau Song; The Old Plantation; Lovely Hula Hands; Frangipani Blossom; Farewell My Tane; Adventures in Paradise; Return to Paradise', and Home in Hawaii'. Six bonus tracks include a brief session outtake of 'Return to Paradise' and five previously unissued Hawaiian tracks recorded in 1961 featuring 'My Little Grass Shack (in Kealakakua, Hawaii); The Cockeyed Mayor of Kaunakakai; Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula; Ukelele Lady', and 'King's Serenade'.

Full Track Listing

1. Return to Paradise 2. The Hukilau Song 3. The Old Plantation 4. Lovely Hula Hands 5. Love and Aloha 6. Keep Your Eyes on the Hands 7. Adventures In Paradise 8. Frangipani Blossom 9. Forevermore 10. Farewell My Tane 11. Beautiful Kahana 12. Home In Hawaii (King's Serenade) 13-14. Return to Paradise (false start and studio chatter) 15-16. My Little Grass Shack (in Kealakakua, Hawaii 17. The Cockeyed Mayor of Kaunakakai 18. Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula 19. Ukelele Lady 20. King's Serenade

Seasons (Deluxe Edition) - \$11.98

Bing's final album, originally released in 1977, has never been available on CD, let alone with 14 bonus tracks!! Recently remixed and remastered by original producer Ken Barnes, the new deluxe edition features the original twelve tracks plus Bing's very last recordings, made at a BBC session three days before his death, and five poems recorded for fan clubs but never distributed. Includes from the original release 'Seasons; On the Very First Day of the Year; June in January; Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year; April Showers; June Is Bustin' Out All Over; In the Good Old Summertime; Summer Wind; Autumn in New York; September Song; Sleigh Ride', and 'Yesterday When I Was Young', plus the bonus poems 'Around the Corner; If; The Singers; Lucy Gray (Solitude)', and 'The Slave's Dream', and the BBC recordings 'Feels Good, Feels Right; Nevertheless; The Only Way to Go; Summer Wind; The Night Is Young and You're So Beautiful; There's Nothing I Haven't Sung About; As Time Goes By', and 'Once in a While'!

Full Track Listing

1. Seasons 2. On the Very First Day of the Year 3. June in January 4. Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year 5. April Showers 6. June Is Bustin' Out All Over 7. In the Good Old Summertime 8. Summer Wind 9. Autumn in New York 10. September Song 11. Sleigh Ride 12. Yesterday When I Was Young 13. Around the Corner 14. If 15. The Singers 16. Lucy Gray (Solitude) 17. The Slave's Dream 18. Feels Good, Feels Right 19. Nevertheless 20. The Only Way to Go 21. Summer

Wind 22. The Night Is Young and You're So Beautiful 23. There's Nothing That I Haven't Sung About 24. As Time Goes By 25. Once in a While

(Editor: So we've got "Seasons" at last plus the poems plus the BBC tracks. Wonderful!)

The Television Specials Vol. 1 (dvd) - \$24.98

He was far and away the most popular recording artist of the pre-rock 'n' roll era, and ranks (in box office tickets sold) as the third most popular actor of all time. But for many people, Bing Crosby is best remembered as the congenial host of his legendary television specials, and now, **FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER ON HOME VIDEO**, we are bringing you four of those TV events on one long-awaited double-DVD set! Extras include interviews, PSA's and commercials! Release date: April 20.



I'll let you take a deep breath and go and sit down somewhere quietly! This is an incredible set of releases for which we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Robert Bader of Bing Crosby Enterprises. Please buy as many of these reasonably priced issues as you can. If they sell well, we shall undoubtedly get further bonanzas in the future.

Bing Crosby Internet Museum

Steven Lewis set up the Bing Crosby Internet Museum (BCIM) in 1996. In January this year it was very disappointing to read first that the Bulletin Board maintained by the Museum was closed and the next day the message when trying to access the site was:

"The website declined to show this webpage"

It appears that there was a dispute between Bing Crosby Enterprises and the BCIM about certain contributions made to the Bulletin Board. Certainly there had been some increasingly belligerent and sometimes rather childish exchanges in the days leading up to the disappearance of the site. We are told that Bing Crosby Enterprises and the Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City (which had hosted the site free of charge on their server for 14 years) had then been in touch with each other and the outcome was for the College to decide to close down the Museum completely.

The ICC was not involved in the running of the Museum in any way but this is an unfortunate loss because the site contained an enormous amount of reference material which showed up regularly through Google searches and enabled people to find out about Bing. Many got in touch with me through the link on the Museum and some joined the ICC. Bing Crosby

Enterprises used the BCIM to give us information about new developments.

Steven Lewis, a lifetime Crosby fan, had spent hundreds of hours over a 14 year time span promoting Bing on the Internet through the BCIM having being into the World Wide Web at an early stage. I do not have any up-to-date statistics but some years ago the BCIM site was registering more than 50,000 hits a month and it is probable that the figure had increased substantially since then. It was a very successful site which did much to perpetuate Bing's image.

Many people contacted me to find out what was going on and one man commented:

...The vast majority of Crosby fans who have access to the Bulletin Board maintained a dignified silence, but I must say that when "Jarbie" attempted to introduce a much-needed note of calm, it was like a breath of fresh air... I'll miss the bulletin board - it was a great place to share the knowledge and expertise of some *serious* Crosby-philis.

Several of those who were in touch with me were very concerned about the ramifications for the ICC if we even reported the matter in the magazine.

It is always upsetting when people who share a common interest fall out. The British arm of the ICC used to be bedevilled by such disputes in years gone by. I became Assistant Editor of this magazine in 1989 and then Editor in 1993 and I have taken the view that, with the number of serious Crosby fans almost inevitably bound to diminish, it was crucial that we all pulled together and avoided personality clashes. I have not always been successful but that has been the policy. It would have been nice if a peace treaty could have been negotiated so that the Museum could re-open on a different server but this is not going to happen.

I shall miss the Museum and as you will see later in this issue, there were some very worthwhile contributions to the Bulletin Board apart from the occasional hostile ones. Steve Fay and David Lobosco, who were regular and prolific contributors to the Bulletin Board, attempted to fill the gap by setting up their own blogs. David soon closed his site down but Steve is still running his Forum as we go to press. Go to <http://groups.google.com/> and search for Bing Crosby.

To replace some of the reference information contained on the BCIM site, I have added some data to the BING magazine web site with the kind assistance of Steven Lewis. Files added include the Bing Crosby Information File, Bing - A Diary of a Lifetime, the Chronological Crosby CD listing, the Sheet Music listing, the V-Disc listing and the BINGANG index. An additional link has been added for Richard Baker's (who is also known as Jarbie) wonderful discography.

So where do I personally stand in this matter? I feel very sad about this development but it's happened and we must look to the future. A virtual "war" broke out following the closure of the BCIM and it was Bing Crosby who was the real loser in this. Bitterness consumes people and many Bing fans will be turned off by disputes such as these. The way forward must be for hostilities to cease and for all concerned to unite to make

sure that we work together to fulfil our mission to perpetuate the memory and the musical legacy of Bing Crosby for the benefit of future generations.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Bing on Facebook

In the spring 2009 edition of the magazine, we mentioned the setting up by Bing Crosby Enterprises of a Bing Crosby page on Facebook. You will recall that Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them. There are said to be over 350 million people worldwide using Facebook and probably most of these are younger than the average ICC member.

The good news was that, early in February, there were 5427 fans of Bing attached to the page which is a wonderful achievement in such a short time.

The link was:

www.facebook.com/pages/Bing-Crosby/44544738326

There was a discussion facility too and this was closely regulated as to content. In fact, during the "war", many mentions of the BCIM dispute were quickly deleted (which I can understand if one wanted the row to die down) but surprisingly the person who made the mention was also removed as a "fan" of the Facebook page. One of these so removed was Cathie Wilson who had spent more than a quarter of a century running the Bing's Friends & Collectors Society with her husband!

The next bizarre development in the "war" was to find that the Bing Crosby Enterprises Facebook page had disappeared too! It is said that it was 'reported' for being offensive or abusive. There had been no luck in getting it restored as we went to press.

I do hope that a Crosby fan was not responsible for the page being removed. To have over 5000 people attached to it was a step in the right direction to keep Bing's image perpetuated. Let's hope the page has reappeared by the time you are reading this.

The ICC initially set up a Facebook page called Bing Crosby (ICC) mainly as a link to the BING magazine website and I have not done much with it as I was happy to take a back seat to the BCIM and to the Bing Crosby Enterprises page. I have now started making a few more entries on it and there is a discussion facility on this as well if anyone would like to use it.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Bing's Friends & Collectors Society

We were sorry to read that the **Bing's Friends & Collectors Society** has issued its final newsletter. Hobie Wilson had written in the latest newsletter for October – November (#165): "I recently learned that I have some health issues which makes it difficult to continue to publish our newsletter on a regular basis." We wrote to Hobie and Cathie sending our best wishes for a speedy recovery and congratulating them on 28 years of superb service to the cause. Matters had obviously moved on quickly as Cathie replied:

"I am happy to report that he came through his triple bypass surgery like a champ (Nov. 2). He has now been

discharged from the ICU to what is termed a "step down" unit and where he continues to recover from the surgery. ...please know that the well wishes and prayers are so appreciated and that your notes of encouragement have only enhanced Hobie's recovery."

Since then, Cathie has written to us saying:

"Hobie is doing well and is back to his regular routine with his improved health issues. He continues to be heavily into things Crosby, Bing that is and still corresponds with many former members of the old Bing's Friends & Collectors Society. There are no plans to revive the organization."

Mary Crosby

The July 2009 issue of *Cowboys & Indians* magazine carried an interview with Mary Crosby by Jordan Rane.

Bing Crosby's only daughter talks about her famous dad, her beloved horses, and her life after 'Dallas'.

Who shot J.R.? If you're over 37, you probably know this phrase like the back of your dad's old Barcalounger. To this day, it remains the most brilliantly prolonged marketing tag in TV history. Bigger than "Kiss my grits!" "Dyn-o-MITE!," and "Watchu talkin' 'bout, Willis?" combined. In fact, for most of 1980, it was one of the world's most pressing questions.

Was it Bobby or Sue Ellen? Pamela or Cliff Barnes? Or was it, perhaps, one of those jokers walking down every street in every town that year wearing an "I Shot J.R." T-shirt? Who pulled the trigger on John Ross Ewing Jr. on March 21, 1980, at the end of that unforgettable season closer of *Dallas*?



Mary Crosby as Kristin Shepard

From 1979 to 1981, Mary Crosby played the role of Sue Ellen's scheming sister, Kristin Shepard, whose affair-gone-wrong with the deliciously vile J.R. Ewing led to that undisclosed shooting in TV's most famous cliffhanger. But you already knew that 29 years ago.

Here's what you may not know about Crosby, the surprise "who" of *Dallas*' signature episode. A film actress, mother, close friend of Larry "J.R." Hagman, and bareback rider of horses lovingly raised in her own backyard, she's also the daughter of one of the most beloved singers of all time.

We tracked Mary Crosby down at her mountain retreat in Malibu to tell us about life with her famous father, Bing Crosby, and the quiet cowboy legacy he left. Turns out it's as wonderfully enduring as that noisy episode of *Dallas*. Who shot J.R.? Maybe that's all water under the bridge. But here's a lasting glimpse of the real woman behind the trigger.

Cowboys & Indians: It wouldn't seem right if we didn't ask at least one behind-the-scenes question about that whole J.R. business. Were you as shocked as the rest of us that Bing Crosby's daughter was the one who fired that silver bullet?

Mary Crosby: Well, maybe not quite as shocked as some, but it was actually a long shot that I even got that role. The producers had been pleased with my audition, but were still very concerned about the general public accepting that the 19-year-old daughter of Bing Crosby and *White Christmas* and Minute Maid would be doing all of these trashy things on a prime-time television series. And so they really did take a chance on me—and it was definitely a fun ride. When I got the role I had no idea how huge it would get. None of us on the show did. I remember when we broke the Nielsen ratings record for that episode and everyone was screaming and yelling and jumping up and down. It was fabulous.

C&I: Was it overwhelming at all, suddenly being at the center of that whole "Who Shot J.R." craze?

Crosby: I don't think it affected me too much personally. I was living down a dirt road beside a mountain on a remote property in Malibu in the middle of nowhere with horses, dogs, and chickens during that time. In fact, I still am. So I managed to shelter and ground myself pretty well from all of the hype.

C&I: Any contact with J.R. since then?

Crosby: Not only am I still in contact with Larry [Hagman], but he walked me down the aisle at my wedding, and he and Maj [his wife, Maj Axelsson] are godparents to my two sons. They're like family to me, but a far more beloved and less dysfunctional one than that family on *Dallas*.

C&I: Let's talk about that other giant family figure—your father, Bing Crosby, who was posthumously inducted into the Western Music Association Hall of Fame just last year. What were your thoughts when you heard the news?

Crosby: Of course something like that is wonderful whenever it happens, but I was especially touched because I don't know how much he'd been recognized that way during his life. I mean, my father certainly wasn't a country singer. He was someone who could sing country really well, and he loved it. But it's so

gratifying that he's been acknowledged this way because singing country music and being a cowboy—riding horses, hunting, fishing, having a ranch—was really such a huge part of his private life.

C&I: Did your father have much to do with horses and ranch life when he was a kid?

Crosby: No, he really didn't. He was a city kid growing up in Spokane, Washington, and his father did the accounting for a brewery—how perfect is that?—and played some ukulele on the side, I think. So I guess my dad was just a cowboy at heart.

C&I: Where do you suppose that cowboy spirit came from?

Crosby: I think—my own little theory here—that people can have the cowboy in them regardless of where they come from. They can be born in Spokane or New York City or anywhere and somehow that's just who they are inside, and they end up there in some shape or form. Anyway, I think that was really the case with my dad—that he embodied the cowboy spirit in who he was and the life he led. As much as he was a huge star and loved the city and the business, it was key for him to always have a chunk of land somewhere in the middle of nowhere with cattle and horses on it.

C&I: The 8,700-acre cattle ranch he originally purchased in Elko, Nevada, as a younger man was probably about as "middle of nowhere" as it gets for a huge celebrity in the 1940s. Any idea what led him there?

Crosby: I think he just had this gift for finding these extraordinary places way off the beaten path and enjoying them wherever they were, whether it was in Baja, Mexico, or northeastern Nevada. But I honestly have no idea how he came to choose Elko. That was before my time, when his first four boys were kids; they were all grown up by the time my brothers and I were in the picture. They all spent their summers at Elko, and I don't know if they liked it as much as we enjoyed our ranch experiences growing up later on, but it was a different world and a different time and I wasn't there. I will say that my father always wanted a place where his kids could experience that sort of life. It was just really important to him. And all of his ranches were working ranches. They weren't —what's the word?—McRanches.

C&I: Was your father a good rider?

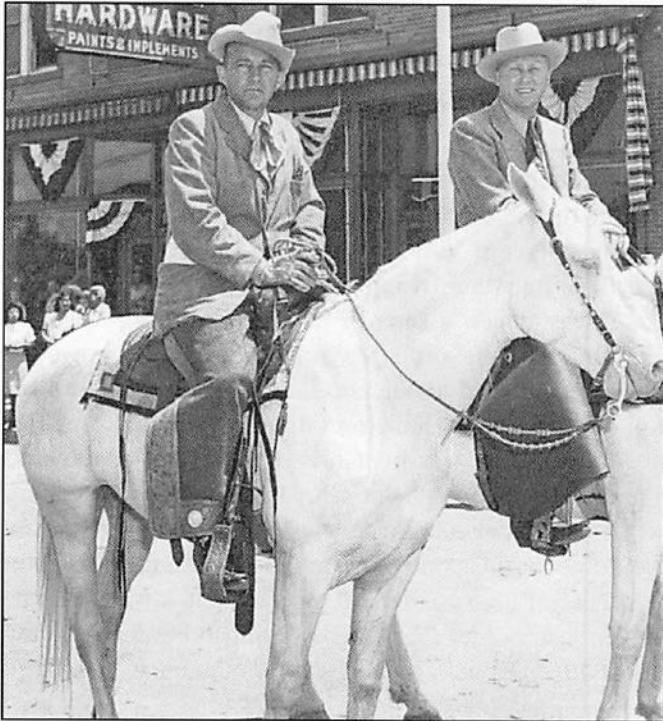
Crosby: He was an excellent rider. A natural rider. He started the Del Mar Racetrack, so he owned Thoroughbreds, but he was a real equal-opportunity kind of guy when it came to horses. He didn't limit himself to the top hat and tails. He owned quarter horses, rode Western, and he could kinda do it all. He just made everything that he did look easy, my dad. That was one of his wonderful talents.

C&I: So where was your "Elko" growing up?

Crosby: When I was 2, my dad moved us out of Beverly Hills and we were raised just outside of San Francisco. But we also spent a lot of time at his 1,500-acre ranch just outside of Burney in Northern California. It was called Rising River Ranch, and it was run by my uncle Leonard, who was a real cowboy. There was a river that ran right through it with lots of trout. There were quarter horses and Charolais cattle. It was a working

ranch and we just loved it. It was a huge part of our lives.

C&I: You and your siblings were no strangers to working on the ranch?



Bing rides along an Elko street.

Crosby: Oh, absolutely. Shoveling manure was definitely part of our upbringing. [Laughs.] I remember once trying to chew tobacco—and throwing up—the first year we branded cattle behind the barn. Not a good combination, it turned out. But we'd spend summers there as well as Thanksgivings and Christmases and whenever else my dad could get away. It was great.

C&I: You were the only daughter among lots of sons. Any good father-daughter memories?

Crosby: Well, Dad didn't really know what to do with me, so he just treated me like a boy, which was fantastic. He taught me how to shoot and fish and ride and play baseball and, of course, golf—even though I don't golf. And now I'm a total tomboy with two boys of my own. Go figure. One of the most memorable things he did when we were hanging out at the ranch was to sing me country songs. "Don't Fence Me In," "I'm an Old Cowhand," "Home on the Range"—all the cowboy stuff, and he was an incredible whistler, too. He really loved those songs, and they were very much a part of my experience growing up at the ranch. Some of my sweetest memories are attached to those tunes. And of course he'd sing "Yellow Rose of Texas" to my mother because she's from Texas.

C&I: How great that he brought that part of his work home with him.

Crosby: Well, it wasn't work. That's the thing. I don't think music was essentially ever work for my dad, which isn't to say that he wasn't extremely professional and very focused in what he did. But it really was his love and was easy for him. Plus, I think those country songs really represented his beliefs. He chose to sing them to me when we were out wandering, and they totally rang true to him. And now my kids are growing

up with those songs, too. I was never very good with singing children's songs to my children, but I do sing them those songs.

C&I: Did anyone in the family get Bing's musical ability?

Crosby: My brother has huge musical talent—as a child he was a prodigy on guitar and piano and had perfect pitch. My kids are pretty extraordinary, but then I am biased. I only sing in the shower.

C&I: Is Rising River Ranch still under the family name?

Crosby: Unfortunately, when my dad died we had to sell it. But ironically enough, Clint Eastwood bought it and made it a nature preserve. So that's not a bad follow-up. I'm happy it's still in cowboy hands.

C&I: Do you have a property now where you ride?

Crosby: Yeah, right at home. I live in the mountains in Malibu down a dirt road in the middle of nowhere. Right on my property we have four horses, which I ride bareback—no jodhpurs for this girl. Three of my horses were born here in my backyard, and one was an orphan that I milk-fed from the time she was a week old.

C&I: So you're basically living the ranch life you remember from growing up.

Crosby: Well, not quite so big. Not quite so beautiful. But I definitely have all the ingredients. I have my four-leggeds, and they've certainly been the through line in my life. So I guess you could say my dad's cowboy inclinations have been passed on.

C&I: What's your idea of the perfect California day with the four-leggeds?

Crosby: A ride at the magic hour in springtime if it's not too cold—I'm a California girl, so I'm a wuss. Or a ride at night during a full moon. For me the ride is about who I'm riding with. My favorite horse, Moko, has been with me his entire life. He was born in 1980 and we are old, old beloved friends.

I got married on Moko—rode him right up to Father Joe and my husband, Mark. I always figured that women were taught to find their knight on a white charger—how sad. I had blessedly found my knight, but I had my own damn charger!

C&I: What role are we going to see you playing next on the screen?

Crosby: I just finished a movie for [L.A.-based independent filmmaker] Henry Jaglom, called *Queen of the Lot*. It's a great cast—with Peter Bogdanovich, Noah Wyle, and Tanna Frederick. And my mother [actress Kathryn Grant Crosby] has a role in it, too, which was a real joy for me, being able to work with her on a project.

C&I: Do you have a favorite Bing Crosby movie?

Crosby: As kids we grew up with all the "Road" pictures, and they were wonderful and so much fun. And now my kids watch them. I think his work was amazing in *The Country Girl* and *The Bells of St. Mary's*. And the new colorized reissue of *Holiday Inn* is really wonderful. Plus, of course, *White Christmas*.

C&I: *Rhythm on the Range*?

Crosby: And *Rhythm on the Range*. I can't narrow it down to one.

C&I: And let's not forget *Rhythm on the River*. Your father starred in that one with Mary Martin, Larry "J.R."

Hagman's mother. Some coincidence, no?

Crosby: It's funny, I think that Mary Martin once said to my mother that "our children are like siblings" because of that movie. By the way, have you ever talked with Larry Hagman? I can't imagine that there hasn't been a piece on him in *Cowboys & Indians*, but if not, you should totally pitch it.

C&I: Thirty years after you shot J.R. you're pitching us on a Larry Hagman story. That's pretty cool.

Crosby: [Laughs.] Yeah, there are all these amazing cowboys in my life. Who knew?

Jordan Rane

(Editor. Our thanks to Cowboy & Indians magazine for allowing us to reproduce this fascinating article. Mary does a great job for her father in interviews and the like, doesn't she?)

The Bing Crosby Film Festival

Howard Crosby reported on this for the Bing Crosby Internet Museum.

This past Friday (Dec 4), the Bing Crosby Theater in Spokane hosted its annual Crosby film festival. During the course of the day, three of Uncle Bing's films were screened. Admission was free, with donation boxes placed out front. The first film was *Holiday Inn* at Noon, and they had 240 people in attendance. Next they showed *Road to Zanzibar* at 2:30, with about 125 people there. (I sat through it, and I had not seen it for at least 30 years.) Finally at 7:30 they screened *White Christmas* to a nearly packed house of 540 people! When the show ended, the audience erupted into a standing ovation.

I was privileged to be able to give a 30 minute talk before the last show to the audience about my experiences with Uncle Bing, and they seemed to really love it. Earlier, my cousin Carolyn Schneider gave a half hour talk, and was available in the lobby throughout the day to sign copies of her new book, "Bing: On the Road to Elko". Perhaps not quite the throng as a Sarah Palin book signing, but the people were appreciative nonetheless.

All in all, I know the Board of Directors for the Theater thought it was a great success, and they are already looking forward to next year's festival. From my perspective, it was a delight to see all of the people under 30 years old being exposed to the magic of Bing Crosby on the big screen!

The Advocates of the Bing Crosby Theater host this event every year, on the first Friday in December. Next year's will be on Friday, December 3. They show three of Bing's films, beginning at Noon. Admission is free, but donations are accepted and much appreciated. They have to rent the films, this year *Holiday Inn* cost \$250, *Road to Zanzibar* cost \$150, and *White Christmas* cost \$600. By the way, that is by far the highest rental price for any vintage film, including things like *Casablanca* or *GWTW*.

They did some nice pre-event publicity for this year's event, got some free media coverage, and it was a big success. We are all very much looking forward to next year's event. My sister Katie and I are planning to

get a whole bunch of rare family photographs put on display for next year's event.

I think if any real Bing fans can make it to Spokane next December 3rd, they won't be disappointed.

Howard Crosby

Parallel Lives: Elvis and Bing

In January, there was much attention in the media to the 75th anniversary of the birth of Elvis Presley. Greg Van Beek finds some interesting parallels between two great careers.

I was never a fan of Elvis Presley. He was my Grandmother's favorite. She wasn't a collector, however. She liked to read about him, and had a dresser drawer full of books about him, yet only owned two or three of his albums. One was his Christmas album (her favorite Christmas song was "Blue Christmas", not white), along with his gospel album and a country album. But she would never miss one of his movies when they aired on television. I always found it curious that, while she was eleven years older than Elvis, her birthday was the day after his (Elvis' birthday was January 8th, my Grandmother's was January 9th). By an eerie twist of fate, my Grandmother passed away the day before the twentieth anniversary of Elvis' death on August 15, 1997 of a ruptured aneurysm. She was looking forward to watching all of the special programs on TV the next day.

It was only after her death that I started watching his films on TV, if only to try to discover what she enjoyed so much in them. Elvis had charisma on film, and certainly looked like a movie star, but most of the films, especially those in the late 1960's, were pretty dismal efforts. I've always been one to actually read the credits during movies, and in doing so; I noticed a lot of familiar names that I recalled from watching Bing's films.

Out of some 31 films in total, roughly half of Elvis' movies were made for Paramount. Most of these shared a good number of the same crew that worked on Bing's films, and one in particular (*Blue Hawaii*) was an out and out re-make of one of Bing's 1930's classics. Noting so many similarities, I decided to investigate and compare the movie careers of Bing and Elvis further. At first glance, it appeared (to me at least) that Paramount was trying to recapture the box office draw and star power of Bing in the 1930's and 40's, with Elvis in the 1950's and 1960's.

Elvis' films were pretty well evenly divided between Paramount and MGM, with ten and twelve films respectively for each studio. There were three for 20th Century Fox (co-incidentally, Bing also made three feature films for that studio), and four for United Artists, along with a couple for Universal and Allied Artists. One name that instantly jumped out at me was director Norman Taurog. He directed Bing's films *We're Not Dressing* (1934), *The Big Broadcast of 1936* (1935) and *Rhythm On The Range* (1936). By contrast, he directed

nine of Elvis' films from 1960 to 1968, including two of his better efforts *G I Blues* (1960) and *Blue Hawaii* (1961), the latter being the remake of Bing's 1937 film *Waikiki Wedding*. The big difference was Elvis' version was actually filmed on location in Hawaii, where Bing remained on the Paramount lot.



Bing with Shirley Ross in Waikiki Wedding.

Edith Head, head (no pun intended) of the costume and wardrobe department at Paramount, who tailored Bing in all of his Paramount films from *Rhythm On The Range* (1936) through *Anything Goes* (1956), did the same for Elvis in his films at that studio from 1957-1967. Ditto for Wally Westmore. He applied make-up to Bing from *Road to Zanzibar* (1941) through *Anything Goes* (1956), and to Elvis beginning the following year with his second film *Loving You*, through 1967's *Easy Come, Easy Go* for his Paramount films.

Joseph J. Lilley, of Paramount's music department, worked on all of Elvis' films at that studio, as well as on all of Bing's Paramount efforts beginning with *Holiday Inn* (1942) through *Anything Goes* (1956). Van Cleave, who orchestrated for Paramount, worked on *Variety Girl* (1947), *A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court* (1949), *Top O' The Morning* (1949), *Mr. Music* (1950), *Here Comes The Groom* (1951), *Just For You* (1952), *Road To Bali* (1953), *White Christmas* (1954) and *Anything Goes* (1956) with Bing, and *It Happened At The World's Fair* (1963) with Elvis at MGM.

Ken Darby, whose work with Bing was mainly in the Decca recording studio (most notably as choir director on Bing's biggest selling record, "White Christmas"), also had some sporadic movie work with Bing, beginning in 1933 as a member of the King's Men

Quartet in *Going Hollywood*, and as vocal arranger for the 1949 Disney cartoon *The Adventures of Ichabod and Mister Toad*. Ken was vocal supervisor on Elvis' first movie in 1956, Fox's *Love Me Tender*.

Jeff Alexander's chorus backed Bing on some of his Decca recordings in the late 1940's and early 1950's, such as "Someplace on Anywhere Road" (1949), "All My Love" (1950), "A Crosby Christmas" (1950). He was music supervisor on Elvis' films *Jailhouse Rock* (1957), *Kid Galahad* (1962), *Double Trouble* (1967), *Clambake* (1967), and *Speedway* (1968).

Georgie Stoll's orchestra backed Bing on some of his biggest mid-1930's Decca recordings, such as "June In January" (1934) and "It's Easy To Remember" (1935). He was also music director for the second season of Bing's Woodbury radio series in 1935. His orchestra also backed Bing on the soundtrack of the film *The Big Broadcast of 1936* (1935) while Bing sings "I Wished on the Moon". His association with Elvis began over twenty-five years later, when he provided original music for *Viva Las Vegas* (1964), as well as *Girl Happy* (1965) and *Spinout* (1966). *Girl Happy* is also notable for having Bing's son Gary Crosby featured prominently in the cast. Gary reportedly discussed karate with Elvis during breaks in filming.

Walter Scharf worked in the music department at Paramount on Bing's films *Birth Of The Blues* (1941) and *Holiday Inn* (1942). His musical credits with Bing include the arrangement of the song "White Christmas". His movie credits with Elvis include *Loving You* (1957), *King Creole* (1958), and *Tickle Me* (1965).

Michael Curtiz directed both Bing and Elvis in films. For Bing, it was *White Christmas* (1954) and for Elvis, *King Creole* (1958). Dean Jagger, who played General Waverly in *White Christmas*, was also cast in *King Creole* opposite Elvis. While on the subject of directors, Hal Kanter, who directed Elvis' film *Loving You* (1957), was better known as a writer. He wrote for *Road To Bali* (1953) and also *Let's Make Love* (1960), a Marilyn Monroe film in which Bing made a cameo appearance. He also wrote for Elvis' film *Blue Hawaii* (1961). Jerry Wald, who served as Producer on *Let's Make Love*, also produced Elvis' film at 20th Century Fox, *Wild In The Country* (1961).

Frederick DeCordova directed Elvis in his 1966 film *Frankie and Johnny*. He, of course, was the longtime producer and later director of the Jack Benny TV show (including Bing's March 1954 guest appearance on an episode which also featured George Burns), and also directed Bing's first TV show, "GE Presents The Bing Crosby Show" (with Jack Benny as guest), in January 1954. Sheree North also appears on this initial Crosby TV show, and she later co-starred with Elvis in 1969's *The Trouble With Girls*. Fred DeCordova also served as producer of *The Tonight Show* starring Johnny Carson, and over-saw Bing's two appearances on the show in 1975-76.

Lionel Newman, who served as composer and music director on Bing's film *Say One For Me* (1959), as well as the aforementioned Marilyn Monroe film, served in the same capacity on Elvis' film *Flaming Star* (1960). Lyn Murray shared duties with Lionel on the latter film, and his name is familiar to Crosby record collectors. His orchestra backed Bing on some of his 1950-51 Hawaiian recordings; "Beyond the Reef", "Here Ends the Rainbow", and "Harbor Lights". The Mellomen offered vocal accompaniment to Elvis on his film *Paradise, Hawaiian Style* (1966). They served in the same capacity on Bing's Decca recordings of "St. Patrick's Day Parade" (1951), "Hoot Mon" with Bob Hope (1952), and "Let's Harmonize" (1954), among others.



Elvis sings to Joan Blackman in Blue Hawaii

William Tuttle served as make-up designer on Bing's film *High Society* (1956) and Kathryn (Grant) Crosby's film *The Big Circus* (1959). His film credit with Elvis is *Girl Happy* (1965), working also with Gary Crosby.

Switching to shared co-stars, we find the venerable William Demarest, who had roles in Bing's films *Duffy's Tavern*, *Hollywood Victory Caravan* (both from 1945), *Variety Girl* (1947), *Riding High* (1950), and *Pepe* (1960). He co-starred with Elvis in *Viva Las Vegas* (1964).

Frank McHugh appeared with Bing in his films *Going My Way* (1944) and *Say One For Me* (1959), and on television as Willie on the Bing Crosby Show sit-com in 1964-65 over ABC. He also made a January 1965 guest appearance with Bing on *The Hollywood Palace*. Frank co-starred with Elvis in the 1967 film *Easy Come, Easy Go*.

Speaking of *The Hollywood Palace*, Donna Butterworth made a guest appearance with Bing on the series in 1966. She also co-starred with Elvis on film that same year in *Paradise, Hawaiian Style*.

The Wiere Brothers novelty act appeared in the *Road To Rio* with Bing in 1948, and again on his second TV special for GE in April, 1954. They later appeared in Elvis' 1967 film *Double Trouble*. Anissa Jones co-starred with Bing and Kathryn on their 1969 TV Special *Feelin' Groovy At Marine World*. That same year, Anissa co-starred with Elvis in *The Trouble With Girls*.

Joan Blondell, who co-starred with Bing in 1939's *East Side of Heaven*, also co-starred with Elvis in 1968's *Stay Away, Joe*. Then there's Bing's early singing rival Rudy Vallee. While they did radio work together and appeared on TV's Ford 50th Anniversary Show in 1954, Rudy and Bing never appeared together in a film. The same can't be said for Elvis and Rudy. In what ranks as one of the most surreal moments on the silver screen, aged crooner Rudy Vallee appears with Elvis in his 1968 film *Live A Little, Love A Little*.

Turning to television, Elvis only made four major TV appearances between 1960 and 1977; Frank Sinatra's *Welcome Home Party For Elvis Presley* (1960), *Elvis: The Comeback Special* (1968), *Elvis: Aloha From Hawaii* (1973) and *Elvis In Concert* (1977). Bob Finkel served as Executive Producer of the 1968 Elvis special. He served in the same capacity on Bing's 1970 "Cooling It" special, his 1970 Christmas special, and 1972's *Bing Crosby and Friends* special. Bill Cole was the sound engineer on the Elvis Comeback special, and served as such on Bing's ABC-TV specials in the late 1950's and early 1960's, as well as the aforementioned Bing Crosby and Friends 1972 special.

Marty Pasetta produced Elvis' *Aloha From Hawaii* live concert special in 1973. Marty also served as director on Bing's 1972 *Bing Crosby and Friends* special, as well as his 1970 Christmas Special and the 1977 *BING! A 50th Anniversary Special* for CBS. Ray Klauser was the art director for Elvis' 1973 *Aloha From Hawaii* TV special, and also for Bing's 1972 *Bing Crosby and Friends* special and the 1977 50th Anniversary Special. Ray is responsible for the giant gold BING backdrop seen on stage as Bing sings the lengthy medley of his hits accompanied by Joe Bushkin for the finale of the 50th anniversary special.

Elvis' final TV concert special was taped seven weeks before his death on August 16, 1977 and aired posthumously. It was directed by Dwight Hemion and produced by Gary Smith. In early September 1977, Hemion and Smith teamed up again for *Bing Crosby's Merrie Olde Christmas* TV special. Taping was completed on September 11th, and Bing passed away, as we know, on October 14th. This special also aired posthumously, six weeks after Bing's death. Bette Midler was slated to work with Hemion and Smith for a

TV special shortly thereafter, and quipped to them "After what happened with Elvis and Bing, I'm not so sure I want to work with you guys!" Hemion and Smith were noted for their expertise at creating music and variety TV specials, and also directed and produced Bing's 1975 Christmas special with Fred Astaire. Rita Scott served as associate producer on all of the aforementioned specials.

Bing and Elvis never worked together professionally, and while it's possible the two met after Bing attended a Presley performance in Las Vegas, no surviving photograph of the two of them together is known to exist. They did, however, record a number of the same songs during their career. Here is a listing of them:

Adeste Fideles / O Come All Ye Faithful
 Aloha Oe
 Beyond the Reef
 Blue Hawaii
 Blue Moon
 Blueberry Hill
 Danny Boy
 Down by the Riverside
 The First Noel
 Gentle on My Mind
 Harbor Lights
 Have I Told You Lately That I Love You
 Here Comes Santa Claus
 Hey Jude
 I'll Be Home for Christmas
 I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen
 Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho
 Malaguena
 O Little Town of Bethlehem
 Old MacDonald Had a Farm
 Put Your Hand In the Hand of the Man
 Santa Lucia
 Silent Night
 Silver Bells
 Snowbird
 Spanish Eyes
 Swing Low Sweet Chariot
 True Love
 When the Saints Go Marching In
 White Christmas
 Winter Wonderland

On August 16, 1977, as Bing was preparing for what turned out to be his final performance in the United States, word reached him of the death of Elvis. ABC news correspondent Bill Redeker telephoned Bing for his reaction, and this is what he had to say:

"He is a figure that really is part of our musical history. The things that he did during his career, the things that he created, are something important. He's going to leave millions and millions of friends and fans

deeply bereaved, I'm sure, because he had an immense following. You can compare him to pretty near anyone; Sinatra, Elton John...or is he an Englishman? (Bing chuckles), Neil Diamond, Sedaka, but in his time, in his day, Elvis was just as important as any of them, if not more so than most."

Greg Van Beek

(Editor: Amazing! I knew that there were a lot of overlaps between the Bing and Elvis but I had no idea how many. Another thing they had in common was being strongly influenced by their mothers and of course they died the same year too. It's revealing to read Bing's perception of the importance of Elvis in 1977. Elvis had not had a top ten record for five years and may well have been considered by some to have been a spent force at that time.)

Christmas not what it used to be, but becoming better

Wig sent us the Washington Post's Editorial from last Christmas Day and it's well worth reading.

So, you were dreaming of a white Christmas? Well, be careful what you dream of—you just might get two feet of it. Not that it's all that white by now. The snows of last week, growing ever grayer under their daily misting of petroleum byproducts, plowed into alps that may loom over shopping center parking lots for weeks, are a reminder that white Christmases aren't what they used to be when Irving Berlin wrote that song and Bing Crosby first sang it.

But, then, for most of America, they never were. Mr. Berlin was known to favor warmer climes around Christmastime, and in fact there's an opening stanza to his "White Christmas" that you've likely never heard, which goes as follows:

*"The sun is shining, the grass is green,
 The orange and palm trees sway.
 There's never been such a day
 in Beverly Hills, L.A.
 But it's December the 24th,
 And I am longing to be up North . . ."*

And maybe he really was. But that stanza was removed early on, wisely so, and the song went on to become the most essential contribution of all to the creation of the 20th-century American Christmas. It was a Christmas that was secular, sentimental, commercial and, to a large extent, more inclusive than the religious celebration that preceded and now accompanies it. The unlikely pastorate of children listening to hear sleigh bells in the snow was created by a refugee from pogroms whose last memory of Russia was the sight of his house burning to the ground when he was 5 years old. Israel Baline's family made its difficult way to a difficult life in a New York tenement, where he often heard his mother

say, "God bless America," and some years later, after he became Irving Berlin, he wrote that, too.

"White Christmas" was written in time for the second Christmas after Pearl Harbor, the conclusion of a year that had gone very badly for America and its allies, but when things were starting to look more hopeful. Like a number of other popular songs that came along during the war, it captured the sadness of separation, the longing for peace and normality and the nostalgia for a better time that really wasn't that long ago. These shared emotions gave Christmas a new poignancy and significance during the war years, and made it something different from what it had been. Radio, with its nationwide audience—just about everyone listened to the same shows—not only amused and entertained, it comforted and reassured. In the dark war years, it created a new Christmas spirit.

Much of the sentiment has since faded, of course, but despite all the vulgarities, horror movies and other excesses, Christmas has continued to move toward becoming a truly national holiday, a time of good feeling and universally shared hopes, and an occasion in which all can share. And in the supermarket aisles, Bing Crosby still sings a song that is reaching 70 years old but can even now make you pause and reflect for a moment, though probably not on the sound of sleigh bells you've never heard.

Beautiful Memories: A Reconsideration

Joe McGrenra offers his thoughts on a rare album.

(NOTE: This article concerns the 1977 Bing Crosby *Beautiful Memories* album not the Dutch three-CD box set version of *The Complete United Artists Sessions*, which was also known as *Beautiful Memories*.)

Perhaps of all Bing Crosby's original albums, none is so ignored and underrated as *Beautiful Memories*, which was the last album of original material that was released during his lifetime.

A perfect concept album is one of the hardest things to create, because, no matter how great the concept, coming up with twelve (or more) perfect songs can be a daunting task. Even Frank Sinatra who probably did more concept albums than any other popular singer would almost always have a weak song or two on his albums. (Note: Although I would credit Frank Sinatra with having the greatest number of totally successful concept albums, I would credit Bing Crosby with having the best in *How the West Was Won*).

Beautiful Memories was intended solely as an album of (then) contemporary songs with no other theme. It had the distinction of being the only one of the albums Bing did with Ken Barnes and Pete Moore that was recorded in the then contemporary manner of the music tracks

being recorded at one location/time (in this case in London) and the vocalist (Bing) dubbing/overlaying the vocals later (in this case in Los Angeles, CA). This was not done intentionally. Due to unforeseen circumstances Bing had to miss the recording sessions in London and with so little advance notice, it would have been impossible to cancel and reschedule without incurring heavy costs (paying musicians, etc.). The end result made it unique among the collaborations between these three gentlemen.

For those who may not have ever heard the original album or who may have forgotten it, it consisted of twelve tracks. Those tracks were "Beautiful Memories", "Little Love and Understanding", "My Resistance Is Low", "Children", "Déjà Vu", "When a Child Is Born", "The More I See You", "What I Did for Love", "Yours Sincerely", "We've Only Just Begun", "The Woman on Your Arm", and "The Only Way to Go". It was the released in late August/early September 1977 coming out very shortly before Bing passed away. During those last few years of his life, there was a great deal of new Crosby material recorded and released and after his death Polydor Records would release *Seasons: The Closing Chapter*, which got a great deal of attention, as Bing Crosby's last album. That does not take into consideration, re-releases of earlier material. With all of that product on the market, several did not get the attention that they deserved.

I don't want to give a track by track review, but will just say I think the selection of songs was perfect. To comment on only a few — from the time that I first heard it, "The Woman on Your Arm" has been one of my absolutely favorite Bing Crosby recordings and "When a Child Is Born" may be the most popular of the Ken Barnes/Pete Moore tracks that Bing recorded, as it was included not only on the original album, but also on the *Bing Crosby: The Complete United Artists Sessions* CD, and has been included on at least one Christmas album.

It would be great to see a reissue of this album. If money and clearances were not an issue, how would this author see the first solo /Special Edition CD release of *Beautiful Memories*? The thing that has always seemed out of place about the original album was the cover photo of Bing. It just didn't seem right and actually seemed to be of the same era as the cover photo from the *Thoroughly Modern Bing* album. Back in 2006 on a forum on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum, Ken Barnes posted (concerning the photo of Bing used on the cover) that "...The cover shot was indeed supplied by Bing Crosby Enterprises and was not taken exclusively for the album..." with longtime Bing Crosby fan Greg Van Beek concluding "...I believe the photo dates to the 1970-73 period, as Bing hadn't yet started growing the longer sideburns he sported beginning in 1974..."

Subsequent to those discussions, Greg obtained a rare set of three 45rpm promotional records for Bing's March 1970 *Goldilocks* television special, and the sleeve

of one of them used the identical photo from the (eventual) *Beautiful Memories* album cover. This makes the photo probably from the late 1969-early 1970 timeframe. So, the first thing I would do for a Special Edition *Beautiful Memories* CD release would be to select a new photo (circa 1976). Although other than the photo, I would keep the original album's color scheme and design.



Next would be the issue of extra material/bonus tracks. Too often, bonus tracks seem to be selected with no rhyme or reason, except to add more selections to a particular release. The addition of inappropriate tracks could (and actually has in this writer's opinion in numerous cases) reduce the effectiveness of a concept album. Due to the fact that *Beautiful Memories* was originally intended only as an album of 1970s era contemporary songs, and the fact there is some outstanding and relevant material available, this would present an opportunity for some great bonus tracks. I would include "Come Share the Wine" (recorded for but not included on the original LP), the November 5th, 1976 version of "Seasons" (which was recorded at the same session as "Beautiful Memories" and "We've Only Just Begun"); the alternate take (from *Bing Crosby: The Complete United Artists Sessions*) for "My Resistance Is Low"; the version of "Children" from the December 1976 Crosby Christmas special; and the "We've Only Just Begun" duet that Bing and Ray Bolger did on the *Tonight Show*. This would nicely expand and supplement the original album with some relevant (and some rare) extras.

Joseph J. McGrenra

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of \$3 or £2 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from the transaction as a result of these entries
Please send all advertisements to the Editor

Gord Atkinson, 14 Castle Harbour Crt., Ottawa, ON K2S 1B9, Canada.

Gord's *The Crosby Years* series remains available direct from him. US members can obtain the CDs for \$16.00 US each which includes postage. With the strengthening of the Canadian currency against the US dollar, Canadian purchasers should now pay CAN \$16.00 for each CD. Payment can be made by check or money order to Gord Atkinson. Please note that USA members may send US dollar checks.

UK, Irish and European members who wish to obtain the CDs should contact Malcolm Macfarlane. The CDs cost £10 each.

Mrs. Lyn Brown, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, UK (Tel: 01226 201106)

Mrs. Brown is faced with the prospect of disposing of her father's Crosby collection. Her dad was the late Harry Gledhill. Ideally she would like to pass it on to one person but if necessary she will break it up. She has relatives who work in Leeds and Edinburgh so the collection could be delivered to those localities or indeed to anywhere en route. Although the collection is catalogued, Mrs. Brown does not really know what is included but there are many CDs, LPs and books. Please telephone Mrs. Brown after 5 p.m. weekdays or at weekends.

Michael Crampton, address on inside front cover.

Michael has many spare copies of old issues of BING magazine and please contact him if you would like to pick some up for a nominal figure. Also, there are still some copies left of the excellent book covering Bing's TV appearances and Michael is offering these at the hugely discounted price of only £9.99.

Festival Films, 6115 Chestnut Terrace, Shorewood, MN 55331, USA (Tel. & Fax: (952) 470-2172, e-mail: Fesfilms@aol.com – website: www.fesfilms.com/)

Ron Hall at Festival Films can meet all your NTSC requirements for Bing on DVD and video.

Mrs. M. Herbst, Elverson, PA, USA

Long standing ICC member Keith Herbst recently passed away after a lengthy illness, and his widow Marilyn, with no thought to remuneration, is looking to pass the Crosby collection he had acquired on to parties who might value the items as he did. There are about 170 Bing Crosby CD's, most of the Jonzos, along with back issues of BING magazine, which Mrs. Herbst would like to find a home for. Mrs. Herbst commented:

"It would be wonderful if you had a member in the area who could pick up Keith's collection, as an educated eye could best sort out what it comprises and

distribute it most effectively. I would also be willing to meet someone halfway, if he lived within a couple of hundred miles. This would include Southern New Jersey, Delaware and perhaps Maryland."

If you are interested, please contact her via e-mail at Yobo3@aol.com, or by phone at (610) 913-8446.

Peter Long, Guildford, Surrey, UK

FOR SALE: A 1977 second U.S. printing of the book "The Films of Bing Crosby" by Robert Bookbinder. 256 pages hardback 9in by 11in with dust cover all in very good clean condition. Interested? Offers to Peter Long on 01483 811385 or email: wynnstay@gmail.com. P. and P. extra on agreed figure (wt: 2 1/2 lbs).

The Record Centre, 43, Presthope Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 4NJ, UK (Tel: 0121-476-9619, e-mail: Raypurslow@blueyonder.co.uk)

Mail Order only. Ray Purslow has always been a real supporter of the Crosby cause and for your Bing CDs, contact Ray.

Worlds Records, P. O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94947, USA (phone: 1-800-742-6663) www.worldsrecords.com/

Try this company for CDs imported from the UK and elsewhere.

Crosby Clubs Around the World

The ICC is very pleased to be associated with the Australian Bing Crosby Society. The society's details are:

The Australian Bing Crosby Society

Peter De Ryk, 11 Holden Rd., Kallista, Victoria 3791, Australia. (tel. [03] 9755 3013 - email: deryk@net2000.com.au)

Bi-monthly newsletters are issued and there are regular film nights. In December, the Crosby film was *Going My Way* supported by the 1957 TV show *Happy Holidays with Bing and Frank* plus a 1935 Bob Hope short called *Watch the Birdie*. The February showing was *High Society* and a BBC documentary about Al Bowlly. Film nights this year are on April 20, June 15, August 17, October 19 and December 7 at Mamma Vittoria's, 343 Smith St., Fitzroy, Victoria.

Internet sites:

www.BingCrosby.com

This site comes under the Bing Crosby Enterprises banner and contains rare photos of Bing, radio shows, recordings and clips from Bing's films.

Bing Crosby on Facebook

This also comes under the auspices of Bing Crosby Enterprises and Bing's Facebook page is at:

www.facebook.com/pages/Bing-Crosby/44544738326

A Bing Crosby Discography

Maintained by our member, J. Richard Baker (known as Jarbie), this excellent site can be found at:

www.jazzdiscography.com/Artists/Crosby/crosby.html

The Bing Crosby Free Speech Fan Forum

Set up by Steve Fay, this new site has a wide ranging discussion group. Go to <http://groups.google.com/> and search for Bing Crosby rather than typing in the Forum's very long address.

The Immortal Talents of Bing Crosby

<http://lakeprovidencegirl.com/bing.html>

This is an impressive web site maintained by our member, Crissi Newton. Well worth a look.

OTHER APPRECIATION SOCIETIES

We have reciprocal arrangements with the following clubs and societies for publicity purposes. They kindly advertise our club in their magazines and we are very pleased to return the favour.

In Tune International, Flat 9, Milchester House, 12 Staveley Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 7JX, UK, (Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 1323 412698) website: www.intuneinternational.com)

Described as the magazine for lovers of the golden age of popular music, this excellent periodical contains 40 pages about nostalgic and easy listening music.

International Tony Bennett Appreciation Society, c/o Mark Fox, 15 Kilpin Hill Lane, Staincliffe, West Yorkshire, WF13 4BG, UK (phone: 01924 401909, e-mail: markfoxtbas@hotmail.com).

Nat King Cole International Fan Club, c/o Roy Holmes, 18 Rutland Drive, Morden, Surrey SM4 5QH, UK (phone: 020-8648-8858, web page:

www.highstreets.co.uk/kcc/index.shtml)

King Cole Comments is the club's newsletter and this is issued three times each year. For a free copy, please send a SAE to Roy Holmes.

Friends of Doris Day, c/o Dr. Sue Gökgör, 71 East Avenue, Oxford OX4 1XR, UK. eMail: suegokgor@aol.com

Started in 1997, The Friends of Doris Day is an international Doris Day appreciation club based in Oxford, UK - and the only Doris Day fan club in the UK. The club publishes three 32 page magazines a year, packed full of articles and information you won't find anywhere else, including memorabilia signed by Doris herself for auction or sale. Subscription is £16 for UK members, £21 (or equivalent in Euro or US\$) for Europe, £22 (or equivalent in US\$) for other countries.

The Deanna Durbin Society, c/o Justin Clarke, 21 Main Rd., Wetley Rocks, Stoke-On-Trent, ST9 0BH, UK (phone: 01782 551103).

Dick Haymes Society, c/o Roger L. Dooner, 2951 Tyler St., NE Minneapolis, MN 55418, USA, or Maurice Dunn, 16 Cradley Park Road, Netherton, Dudley West Midlands, DY2 9SR, UK

(Web site: www.dickhaymes.com/dhsociety/index.html)

International Al Jolson Society, c/o John Wehrman, 1195 Hickory Hill Drive, Green Bay, WI 54304, USA (e-mail: JWWehrman@aol.com - web site: www.jolson.org)

Frankie Laine International Appreciation Society, c/o Tony Cooper, 18 Napier Crescent, Seamer, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 4HY, UK (phone / fax 01723 863022 - email: tony@flias.com ,

website: <http://homepages.tesco.net/flias/>)

Sinatra Music Society - Mrs. Pat Harvey, National Secretary, 11 Mossbank Avenue, Burntwood, Staffordshire WS7 4UN, UK (tel: 01543-317743).

A bi-monthly magazine called *Perfectly Frank* is issued. Fees within the UK are £15 a year; £19 for European membership and £23 for the USA. Web page: <http://sinatramusicsociety.googlepages.com/>

Sinatra Music Society, Dublin Branch, c/o Chris Hitchcock, 21 Roselawn Walk, Dublin 15, Ireland (phone: 01 8212418).

Meetings take place at 8:00 pm, second Monday of every month, The Montrose Hotel, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.

International Andy Williams Appreciation Society, P. O. Box 5, Westerham, Kent TN16 1UE, UK

The club has been running since 1967 and membership costs £6.50 (UK), £7.50 (Europe) and \$15 (USA). A quarterly newsletter is issued.

Books 'n' Bing

Martin McQuade looks at new books mentioning Bing.

1. Moon River and Me

by Andy Williams, published by Viking, a 6.3" by 9.1" hardcover book with 320 pages. \$17.13 at Amazon.com, £9.94 at Amazon UK. ISBN-10: 0670021172, ISBN-13: 978-0670021178

A Remembered Voice

"Our next guest is a gentleman who needs an introduction – like a sunrise needs a rooster! In Germany he's *Der Bingle*; in Japan he's *Bing Yu-San*. In Spokane, Washington he's Katie's boy Harry. Ladies and Gentlemen, Bing Crosby!"

(From *The Andy Williams Show*, October 30, 1966)

In the thirties and forties it was impossible for a young male singer wishing to make his mark not to emulate Bing Crosby. Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Johnny Mercer, Billy Eckstine – they would all drink to that. Alas, they are sadly gone. Fortunately, there are a precious few alumni of this class who can still testify to this truth. Foremost among these is Andy Williams.

When he and his three brothers were growing up in the thirties in Iowa, all aspiring to enter show business as vocalists, Crosby's voice would have been positively pervasive. Naturally, their determination would have dictated that they avidly listen to and assimilate The Master's pioneering sound. In Mr. Williams' recently published memoir, *Moon River and Me*, (Viking, 2009) he is unequivocal. "Bing Crosby was an idol to us."

Thanks to an appearance on *Mail Call* in 1945 the four boys enjoyed a stroke of serendipity which changed their professional lives.

"Many Hollywood stars appeared on *Mail Call*; and it was through the show that we secured our own breakthrough; a recording session with the biggest star of them all: Bing Crosby. It is hard to believe just how much Bing dominated the music industry at the time. At one point Music Digest estimated that his recordings accounted for more than half of the entire eighty thousand hours of recorded music played on the radio every week. Backed by the Notre Dame Choir [this was actually The Mitchell Boys Choir] Bing had sung a number called 'Swinging on a Star' in the movie *Going My Way*. He now wanted to put it on record, but the boy's choir was not available, so Bing's musical director John Scott Trotter, was looking for another backing group. He heard us singing on *Mail Call* and promptly hired us to do the backing vocals for \$25 dollars a piece."

"It was an honor to be given the chance to sing with him, but we were so in awe of him that we were practically trembling, with our arms around one another, as we recorded the song. Bing had a reputation for being a lot less charming offstage than on it, but, if so, we never saw that side of him. He was always very kind and encouraging, both then and in later years."

In those later years The Williams Brothers, along with singing sensation Kay Thompson, created what many consider the greatest night club act in history, a portion of which they reprised on the November 12th 1947 edition of Crosby's *Philco Radio Time*, where they all blended on a knock out rendition of "Jubilee." Eventually, like Crosby, Williams "went solo" and became one of the world's premiere pop vocalists.

Among his early hits was "Hawaiian Wedding Song," derived from a native song which also inspired "Waiting for Thee" from Charles King's 1926 operetta *Prince of Hawaii*, as well as "Here Ends the Rainbow," (lyrics by Johnny Burke) which Crosby recorded in 1951 with Betty Mullin and also performed on the GE Show of April 16, 1953 while George Kainipau and his Island Serenaders rendered the original Hawaiian text. In 1958 the melody underwent yet another translation which provided Williams with one of his signature songs – and occasioned a treasured souvenir.

"Crosby sent me a gracious letter when I recorded 'Hawaiian Wedding Song,' telling me how much he liked it. He loved Hawaiian music...Of course I was thrilled to get that acknowledgement."

When Crosby appeared on Williams' TV program, they hadn't seen each other in twenty years. "Although I had some of the biggest stars in show business as guests over the years, one of the greatest thrills was when my childhood hero, Bing Crosby, agreed to be on my show. He was a guest on the show two or three times, including an appearance during my first season." [To my

knowledge Crosby only appeared once on *The Andy Williams Show*. However they again joined in song on *The Pearl Bailey Show* of January 23, 1971]



*Andy and Pearl Bailey are watched
by Bing and Louis.*

Williams obviously found *Old Dad* quite endearing, as witness this observation. "When he stopped by my dressing room to say hello, he was wearing his trademark hat, smoking his pipe, and wearing an old cardigan. At one time I'm sure it had been a very lovely cashmere sweater- it was obviously one of his favorites – but now it had a hole in the sleeve at the elbow and looked a little weary all over. Bing reminded me of my dad, who got so attached to his favorite jackets or sweaters that he would wear them forever...He kept wearing it... until finally it was so shabby that even dad had to concede that it's days were over. Bing's cardigan wasn't quite in that state, but it had certainly seen better days. I don't know whether wearing his favorite old clothes relaxed him, but he was certainly in a mellow mood that day. Friends had warned me that Bing was quite a 'buttoned – up' sort of person, but to my surprise he really seemed to relax and open up while we were sitting around chatting in my dressing room."

It seems that Williams was once again pleasantly disabused of someone's preconceived notion as Crosby regaled him with tales of his youth. "He started telling me about his early days as one of seven kids growing up in Spokane, Washington. He had been christened Harry but was renamed after *The Bingville Bugle*, a parody of a hillbilly newspaper that started appearing in his local paper. According to Bing, it was a very funny spoof, and he and his friends were forever quoting it to one another. As a result, his friends began calling him Bing from

Bingville, and the name eventually stuck."

Crosby tremendously enjoyed this visit, and the reminiscences poured out of him. "When he grew up, he went to college, intending to be a lawyer, but two things changed his life. The first was when he went to see Al Jolson perform at a local theater and was so blown away by the experience that he never forgot it. Forty years later, as we chatted away in that Burbank studio, he was still in awe of that performance by Jolson, calling him 'the greatest entertainer I ever saw.' The other key event was when he sent away for a set of drums on mail order, taught himself to play, and then began playing and singing with a local band. 'I made so much money doing that,' Bing told me, 'that I thought, *Why should I want to be a lawyer when I can make money and have a lot more fun doing this.*' (One wonders whether Crosby shared his recollections of Kay Thompson, who was his frequent guest on his Woodbury – sponsored show in 1933 and 1934)

This cherished casual encounter would prove to be quite fleeting. "I really felt I'd seen at last a glimpse of the real Bing Crosby that day, even if only for those few minutes, before a couple of network executives arrived, and Bing slipped back into his normal role; like so many big stars he had developed an affable but rather distant public manner, one that kept all but the most persistent Bing worshipers at arm's length." Surely Mr. Williams' natural charm and *bonhomie* put Crosby at ease, but it must have been a task for him to hold his own idolatry at bay.

"When we recorded the show, I was excited as a kid in a candy store to be sitting on a stool alongside Bing and singing a medley of duets with him. We even sang 'Swinging on a Star' just like The Williams Brothers had done with him all those years before. I was a reasonably well known performer by then, but Bing was in an entirely different league – the first and greatest star of the modern era and the man who paved the way for all the singers, like me, who followed him. I found it both humbling and hugely exciting to be sharing a stage with him, listening to that wonderful, relaxed delivery and that still silky smooth and beautiful voice."

Williams recalls a most amusing anecdote. After the television appearance, Crosby called, asking for a favor. "Andy, I've been asked by Princess Grace to sing at the annual Red Cross Charity Ball in Monaco, and I just can't do it. I'm making a movie, and I can't get away. Would you fill in for me.?"

Williams obliged, and experienced one his "toughest audiences," comprised of the crowned heads of Europe, who ignored his performance without a trace of *noblese oblige*. "As I looked at the impassive, indifferent faces...I began to wonder whether Bing really was making a movie or had worked the crowd before and wasn't eager for a repeat."

The two stars also had in common a love for golf. One memory of the game embarrassingly stands out.

"My worst moment probably came at Pebble Beach during the Bing Crosby tournament one year. On the eighteenth green I had a long putt, about thirty feet. I looked up at the announcer's booth at the tower...and saw Bing wave to me and sitting next to him was Phil Harris. Then I noticed that all the cameramen were the same guys who did my show every week. Every camera, every eye was on me. I got so nervous that all the adrenaline drained from my body, and when I finally hit the putt, the putter grazed my toe and the ball ricocheted off at a right angle. There seemed to be about two hundred people in wheelchairs all around the green, and when I missed the shot, they all went 'Ooohhhhhh.' It sounded like a great upchucking. I looked back up at the tower and saw that all the cameras had turned away. Even on the biggest stage I've never felt quite so alone."

Andy Williams shows his abiding respect for Crosby by quoting Phil Harris' eloquent eulogy delivered when he was the host of the first posthumous telecast of the *Crosby Clambake*. "I have learned that God doesn't make mistakes. Today I'm beginning to doubt that."

Moon River and Me leaves no doubt that Andy Williams attained *the rainbow's end* and never ceases to be astonished by his many blessings. Foremost among these is the camaraderie shared with his friend, Bing Crosby. The gracious unfolding of this special bond is a refreshing respite in an entertainment industry grown increasingly callow. This enlightening and entertaining book will surely gratify his legions of *huckleberry* fans, both young and old.

(Editor: I have read this book too and found it very enjoyable indeed. But why do so many show biz autobiographies lack an index? It was particularly annoying with this otherwise excellent book. Appendices containing a discography and TV listing would have been nice too but perhaps this is a job for Ken Crossland and your editor in the years to come?)

2. Bowie: A Biography

By Marc Spitz, published by Crown, a 9.3" by 6.1" hardcover book with 448 pages. \$17.81 at Amazon.com, £17 at Amazon.co.uk. ISBN-10: 0307393968, ISBN-13: 978-0307393968.

An Altogether Different Voice

In a recent biography, *Bowie*, by Marc Spitz (Crown Publishers, 2009) it is revealed that the pop icon appeared as a guest on a TV show starring fellow rock singer Marc Bolan just one week before his untimely demise in a car crash in September, 1977. It would appear to be the case that Bowie's appearance on *Bing Crosby's Merrie Olde Christmas* would be the second time in a row that death befell his television host. This macabre turn of events provoked Bowie to remark that he would stop going on television.

There is also anecdotage about the segment described as "one of the most famous in the history of

TV holiday programming."

"Supposedly this was going to be a straight duet on "Little Drummer Boy," but Bowie decided to weave a lesser – known melody, "Peace on Earth," into the mix because it suited his register better. Crosby abided."

Adding some flavor to this historic encounter, Kathryn Crosby once confided that many on the set were concerned how outrageously accoutered the flamboyant Bowie might be when he arrived for the taping. His singing co-star was typically unflappable. "I don't care how he's dressed, as long as he's on time and on key!"

3. Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from 'Show Boat' to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber

By Geoffrey Block, a 9.2" by 6.1" paperback with 480 pages. Published by Oxford University Press. \$27.95 at Amazon.com. ISBN-10: 0195384008, ISBN-13: 978-0195384000

A new edition of *Enchanted Evenings*, a history of the Broadway musical by Geoffrey Block (Oxford University Press, 2009) devotes a few pages to the film, *Anything Goes*. Mr. Block takes issue with those who claim that this is not a faithful adaptation. "The 1936 Paramount *Anything Goes* may have less of Merman and significantly less of Porter than the stage musical, but it does offer a book that, aside from a few twists here and there, is remarkably similar to the stage plot from two years earlier. Even more remarkably...the film retains a considerable portion of the original dialogue."

The author expresses a wish which many here will share. "Although it often offers tangential connections with the 1934 stage version of *Anything Goes*, this film should be put back in circulation without delay where it can be criticized and enjoyed on its own terms."

4. Hopalong Cassidy On the Page, On the Screen

By Francis M. Nevins, this 520 page book is \$40.00 (+\$5.00 shipping) and can be ordered via the Beverly and Jim Rogers Museum of Lone Pine Film History. To do so, click on the shop link at:

<http://www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org/museum.htm>

Fred Romary brought to my attention a new book entitled "Hopalong Cassidy On the Page, On the Screen" by Francis M. Nevins (Lone Pine Museum, available through Hopalong Cassidy Enterprises). An addendum, "Hoppy and Bing," provides details of an unrealized film, *High Pardner*.

William Boyd, who portrayed Cassidy, was approached by Hal Roach in the fall of 1949 to develop an hour long television program. The deal fell through due to budgetary restrictions. Roach mentioned his proposal to Leo McCarey, who had been Roach's chief of production. McCarey became inspired. Since Bob Hope had just scored a big hit with the western comedy,

Paleface, why not offer a sagebrush saga to Crosby and Boyd? On February 7, 1950 Boyd, who had recently appeared on Crosby's Chesterfield Show, spoke to Bob Thomas of the Associated Press. "It was something I had prayed for – to go back to the studio where I got my start. You can bet that the deal is a sugary one. It will start with the co-starring opus with Bing Crosby. I'm trying to talk them into billing it 'Bing and Hoppy in High Pardner.' These are the two hottest personalities in the business today and everyone should know them by their first names."



Bing and Hoppy act up for the camera

Boyd's widow, Grace Bradley (who co-starred with Crosby in *Too Much Harmony* and the 1935 version of *Anything Goes*) remarked, "It would have been great because Bill loved comedy. But McCarey's favorite writer Frank Butler [who wrote *Going My Way*] couldn't ever get a script everyone liked. He tried; just couldn't get one. That is why we never did make the picture with Bing Crosby – no story."

Meanwhile another Roach alumnus Frank Tashlin developed a similar idea – for Bob Hope, who knew about the *Pardners* idea. This became the box-office smash *Son of Paleface* with another reigning cowboy superstar, Roy Rogers. The author speculates that, if the Crosby/Boyd film had been made, a string of big-scale Hoppy westerns would have ensued. Boyd was on record saying "I've done all I can with Hoppy in the cheap pictures. It's time to give the character more scope, more production values." Fortunately Boyd eventually overcame his reluctance and went on to become a

household name with his legendary TV series.

Note: This volume contains a striking *Chesterfield Show* publicity photo of Crosby and Boyd both pointing pistols at Peggy Lee.

Martin McQuade

Perry Como / Rosemary Clooney

Many members wrote to compliment Ken Crossland and your editor on our Perry Como book. All 150 books we imported for UK residents sold very quickly. We have been very pleased to learn that the book has been nominated for an award for "Excellence in Historical Recorded Sound Research" by the Association of Recorded Sound Collections.

One question many have asked is "What's your next book going to be?" Hopefully it will be about Rosemary Clooney. Michael Feinstein has introduced us to Rosie's daughter Maria and she was supplied with a copy of the Como tome. Through her, the family has indicated that it would like to move forward with the project and we are endeavouring to find a suitable publisher. In the meantime, I have prepared a "Day by Day" document (like my Bing book) for Rosemary which runs to 250 pages already. She certainly had a fascinating life!

I met Maria early in February in Los Angeles and we talked for almost three hours about her mother. She also gave me a separate video interview about Bing which is to be shown at the ICC annual meeting. She had been told by Kathryn Crosby that Rosemary was Bing's closest female friend. Maria remembered Bing coming to the house to record dialogue for the Crosby - Clooney radio show and recalls that they all had to be quiet while this was taking place. The Palladium concerts were remembered with great pleasure. At one stage, Maria was pressed into action to rehearse "Slow Boat to China" with Bing when her mother had been delayed. In the 1977 concerts, Bing had sat at the side of the stage watching Rosie perform and Dante DiPaolo (Rosemary's husband) had said that Bing sang every word with Rosie. Maria dated Harry Crosby at one time and she remains very close to Mary Crosby. She has very warm memories of Bing as, seemingly, does everyone who spent time with him.

Malcolm Macfarlane

An encounter with Bing

Ken Heason, Dennis Saville and Ron Field all sent us this piece which comes from the *Penfriend* magazine, a newsletter for railway pensioners. The chronology is not quite right but it doesn't really affect the story too much.

In October 1977 I was on duty as a Ticket Chargeman at Manchester Piccadilly station, when I had a request that the Chief Inspector wanted to see me in his

office. He told me that Bing Crosby, who had been appearing in Manchester, was on the train with his entourage. They were going to London to fly out to Spain and they had booked breakfast, but there was no breakfast on this train.

Arrangements had been put in place, however, for breakfast to be served on their arrival at Crewe. I was told to inform Mr Crosby of the arrangements - it seems I was to be the fall guy! I located Bing, expecting some outburst, but that didn't happen as he was one of the most polite people I had ever met. I asked him for his autograph and he duly obliged.

Now I used to play golf and was the brunt of a lot of jokes. The wall of my office had quite a few stickers about golf on it and I happened to have one in my pocket, which I gave to Bing. It read 'Old golfers never die - they only lose their balls!' Imagine my surprise a couple of days later when I read the news that Bing Crosby had died near Madrid ... on a golf course.

Jim Annison

Bing's Rarest Broadcast Pressings

John Newton is back with details of some very rare discs indeed and then he goes on to talk about Bing on television in 1931!

Bing Crosby's appearances on radio broadcasts spanned several decades, beginning in the late 1920's and continuing into the era of television when the newer visual format pretty much eclipsed radio as the medium for presenting major entertainment to the public.

The earliest radio programs that we can still listen to today have survived only because they were originally "recorded" in one of two recording processes: (1) Programs that were originally recorded in a recording studio (pre-recorded programming) and were "pressed" onto records for broadcast at a later time, or (2) Live broadcast programs that were recorded at the time they occurred.

While Bing's regular network broadcasts were all broadcast "live" until the mid-1940's, much has survived because, for one reason or another, his programs - or portions of them - were recorded for future reference or enjoyment. Such "off-the-air" recordings are often referred to as "air-checks". Many of the early Bing broadcast recordings that have survived were made via "instantaneous" recordings.

Such "instantaneous" recordings, from the early 1930's, were "cut" onto blank uncoated aluminum discs, and it was in this manner that most air-checks from Bing's Cremo, Chesterfield, and Woodbury programs have survived. From the mid-1930's onward, the metal discs were coated with an acetate-based material. The only other manner for such "instantaneous" recordings was via home-recording methods that existed at the time, enabling radio listeners

to record programming into pre-grooved blank "Victrolac" discs for later playback. Another manner of recording off-the-air radio programming was via direct recordings onto studio masters, just like the commercial recording process that produced 78 rpm records. This method resulted in "pressings", where multiple copies could be made from the original mastered recording, if desired. This method was decidedly more expensive, but produced better quality reproduction. It is these types of radio *pressings* that will be described and discussed following, these being among the rarest radio pressings featuring Bing Crosby.

1. RHYTHM BOYS with Walter O'Keefe - circa June, 1930

The recording of this early broadcast first became generally available to Bing collectors when it was released on an Arcadia LP during 1988. The content is a treat for Bing collectors because it includes The Rhythm Boys performing "Everything's Agreed Upon", a song that they recorded separately for the Columbia label, but was never released. The producer of the LP, a friend from decades past, had never even seen the actual transcription disc since the material was supplied to him on tape. This is the one disc of those listed that I have not been able to physically examine, but coming from a West Coast broadcast of the period I would make an educated guess that the recording might well have been done by Freeman Lang and pressed by Columbia in California.

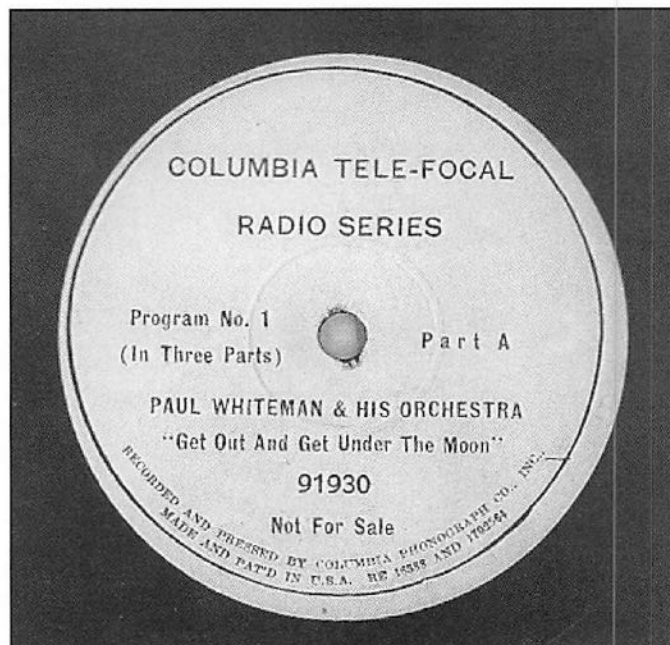
2. COLUMBIA TELE-FOCAL TRANSCRIPTION - Paul Whiteman & His Orchestra - mx. 91930-2

This transcription is part of a pre-recorded program, produced by Columbia Phonograph Co. to advertise Columbia's new Tele-Focal Radio receiver. Beginning in late 1930, Columbia produced a series of these programs, each of which featured various orchestras and vocalists that were Columbia recording artists. The recordings for these programs featured an announcer who promoted the features of the new radio receiver while the entertainment selections were provided by use of dubbings of commercial Columbia records.

There is no mention that phonograph records were used to provide the selection(s), giving the listener the impression that the broadcast was a live performance. Each complete program consisted of three single-sided 12-inch pressings, recorded at 78 rpm.

This particular disc is the first part of the first program in the series, and the program featured the Whiteman orchestra playing "Get Out And Get Under The Moon" (with Bing Crosby vocal). The matrix number of the transcription is W 91930 -2, and was recorded circa September 1930, utilizing the 1928 Whiteman recording. Upon an initial listening, it almost appeared that an alternate take of "Get Out And

Get Under The Moon” was used, but a closer listening revealed that this was the same issued recording played at a faster speed to allow the entire recording to fit with the announcing on the single-sided 12-inch record. To accomplish this, the original recording was played at approximately 85 rpm, and perhaps this is why a second take was required to record this side.



3. GUS ARNHEIM BROADCAST - mx. L-1261 / L-1262

This extremely interesting transcription came to light a number of years ago, and the contents made their initial appearance on a Take Two LP (and subsequent Take Two CD). The original disc is a 16-inch, two-sided transcription, pressed by Columbia but probably recorded by Freeman Lang in Hollywood. The label is a plain white Columbia sound-on-disc label, of the same type often used for motion picture studio recordings and sound-track pressings (Columbia often used these labels for pressings that they did not record). Engraved into the shellac is "Arnheim", as well as the matrix numbers listed above.

The contents of this rare transcription include the earliest known live broadcast featuring Bing Crosby, not only in a solo vocal, singing "Out Of Nowhere", but also in a casual and playful duet with Loyce Whiteman, singing "What Is It?" Bing's days with Gus Arnheim's orchestra at the Cocoanut Grove have always been legendary for Bing collectors, and this recording supplies a most interesting and entertaining audio snapshot of Bing at the Grove. It was probably recorded during April 1931 (definitely recorded between April 5th, when Loyce Whiteman joined the organization, and May 15th, when Bing was last at the Grove).

4. BING'S FIRST SOLO BROADCAST - mx.

PCVE-68310-1 and PCVE-68311-1

These broadcast recordings document a significant milestone in Bing's career, his very first network broadcast as a solo artist. The recordings of this broadcast were made in Victor's Hollywood studios, utilizing two separate recording turntables. One turntable recorded the beginning and ending selections onto 12-inch masters at 78 rpm, while the second turntable recorded the entire 15 minute broadcast onto a 16-inch master at 33-1/3 rpm. It is significant to note that Victor made very few recordings of live radio broadcasts at this time, and even more interesting to note that the provenance of the recording orders did not come from anyone associated with Bing at the time; but, rather, from the competition, The National Broadcasting Company. It seems that Merlin H. Aylesworth, President of NBC, was keenly interested in learning more about the new competition to his network, so it was arranged that Victor would record the first CBS Crosby program. Since both Victor and NBC had the same parent company, RCA, one can readily understand why Victor went to the trouble of using two turntables to ensure that Mr. Aylesworth got whatever he might want. Also interesting is the fact that while Bing's broadcast originated from CBS flagship station WABC in New York, the recording work was done at Victor's Hollywood recording studios, via CBS network's Los Angeles affiliate station KHJ. Pressings of the recordings were made of both shellac and Victrolac, with plain white labels on the recorded side and the ornate Victor cobweb design on the blank reverse sides. Recording information is visible as engraved beneath the plain white labels, showing the matrix numbers, date, "KHJ" and "Crosby Program". The 78 rpm sides also have the selection titles, "Just One More Chance" and "I'm Through with Love" engraved beneath the labels, as well as the word "Personal", indicating that these were private recordings. Luckily, for Bing collectors and fans, copies of the 78 rpm pressings have survived (the masters still exist as well), and RCA Victor even released these on one of their LPs (also the Jonzo series), but unfortunately no copy of the 16-inch has ever surfaced, and Victor's 16-inch metal parts and masters were destroyed as scrap metal decades ago. As a final note, some discographies show different matrix numbers for these recordings, but the numbers given above are correct and appear on both original pressings and on Victor's recording ledger page.

5. THE PARAMOUNT MOVIE PARADE - Victor Transcriptions

In October 1933, Paramount Pictures began producing a series of radio programs, each of which was devoted to promoting and advertising their current and forthcoming film releases. Most of these programs were devoted to promoting an individual film release, but occasionally a program featured performances from

then-current or recent releases. There were 26 programs produced in this series, and they were broadcast weekly from October 1933 through April 1934. The programs were produced and recorded at the Paramount studios in Hollywood, and the recordings were pressed by Victor on 16-inch, single-sided shellac discs. Each has a plain white label with the transcription number, the title, and the week of broadcast typewritten on the labels. Sound track recordings were used, and were interspersed with an announcer talking about the featured films and performers. Bing's voice, taken from sound track recordings, appeared on several of these broadcasts, including transcriptions #4, #8 and #11, singing selections from his films *Too Much Harmony*, *College Humor*, and *The Big Broadcast*.

6. CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM - mx. L-7168

One of Bing's earliest public service announcements appeared via a pre-recorded broadcast during the summer of 1934. The program was produced and recorded in the studios of Freeman Lang in Hollywood, and the transcription was pressed as a 16-inch, single-sided disc by Columbia. The label identifies the Freeman Lang studios in Hollywood, and has an additional paper label pasted on with typewriting stating "Community Chest" with Bing's name in parenthesis below. Engraved into the shellac is: "Bing Crosby - Jimmie Grier Orch" and "Child Welfare Pro." with the matrix number, as given above. The program is announced by John McIntyre, and begins with the announcer advising that this is one of several programs, featuring stars of stage and screen, on behalf of child welfare. The first selection is then introduced, and Bing sings "Fare Thee Well to Harlem". Jimmie Grier's orchestra plays "Moonlight Parade" as the next selection, after which follows a short interview of Bing by John McIntyre. Bing mentions his twins (recently born) and his oldest son, Gary (Bing's son Gary and Jimmie Grier's son will participate in a boxing match at a later time, as they're still barely able to walk).

Following this talk, Bing sings "With My Eyes Wide Open I'm Dreaming", after which the Grier orchestra plays another instrumental selection, "Of Thee I Sing". Announcer John McIntyre closes the program announcing that the program was recorded in the studios of Freeman Lang, and allowing for a following announcement by a station announcer. This program was recorded on either July 31st or August 1st 1934, and it is interesting to note that this work was done in the period between his last Brunswick recording session and his first Decca recording session. Press reports in early August, as noted in Malcolm Macfarlane's splendid *Day-by-Day* tome, credit Bing and Grier for 12 hours of work recording for a National Welfare Association program, an obvious publicity exaggeration. Only one other program of this type has been located, featuring Ruth Etting and the Grier Orchestra, recorded

at a later date in August.

7. THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIE PARADE - World Transcriptions

This was another series of weekly broadcasts, produced by Paramount Pictures to advertise and promote their current and forthcoming film releases. The format was similar to Paramount's earlier series, "The Paramount Movie Parade" which ended in April 1934. Following a short hiatus, this new series of broadcasts began circa early July 1934 and continued for at least 28 weeks, lasting until early 1935. Like the previous series, this new series was produced and recorded at the Paramount Studios in Hollywood, but the pressing of the transcriptions was handled by an entirely different company. This series of transcriptions was produced by the World Broadcasting Company and all are Vertical cut recordings. The transcriptions themselves are 16-inch, pressed in a brown acetate-based flexible material, with bright red World Broadcasting labels, printed with the titles and numbers of each broadcast program. Most were two-sided transcriptions, allowing two programs on each disc (at least one program, not featuring Bing, appears as a single-sided pressing).

Bing's voice, taken from sound track recordings, appears on several of these programs. Program No.8 (mx. H1406) is devoted to promoting Bing's film, *She Loves Me Not*, featuring Bing and Kitty Carlisle in scenes and songs from the film, and was broadcast mid-to-late August 1934. At the end of Program No.8, the announcer states that Bing will be returning to the air-planes in September, on a nation-wide broadcast every Tuesday night. Program No.23 (mx. H1425), broadcast early-to-mid December 1934, is devoted to the film *Here Is My Heart* and features Bing, Marian Mansfield and Kitty Carlisle in songs and scenes from the film.



In a novel manner, two announcers were used for this program (Ralph Robertson and Stuart Buchanan). At the end of Program No.23, listeners are reminded that Bing's voice may be heard every Tuesday night on a national radio broadcast. Bing's voice was next heard on Program No.24 (mx. H1426), which was titled "Highlights of 1934". This program, broadcast mid-to-late December 1934, featured performances by Mae West, Burns & Allen, Jack Oakie & Lyda Roberti, and Bing Crosby. Bing sings "Love In Bloom" on this program.

8. RALEIGH-KOOL BROADCAST - Tommy Dorsey Program - July 20, 1938

Star radio artists often made it a practice to make guest appearances on programs other than their own. While they were often paid for their services, this practice just as often occurred as favors to friends in the industry. On occasion, to show thanks and gratitude, the commercial sponsor of the program might have the program recorded, with pressed copies presented to the artists who gave their time and services for such broadcasts. These personal souvenirs are often the only reason that certain radio programs have survived, allowing later generations to hear performances which might have otherwise been lost forever. An example of this practice occurred following Tommy Dorsey's regular weekly broadcast of July 20, 1938. On this particular program, a group of amateur musicians gathered to compete in a musical contest. These amateur musicians, however, just happened to be radio and films stars in their own right, and obviously joined in and enjoyed the festivities. Bing Crosby appeared playing drums; Dick Powell, the trumpet; Shirley Ross, the piano; Ken Murray, the clarinet; and Jack Benny, of course, playing the violin. After each made solo performances, they joined together for a "jam session" of sorts. The entire program was recorded by Radio Recorders in Hollywood, and was pressed on 12-inch, two-sided 78 rpm shellac records (three records, six parts). Each label had typewritten information, giving the date, program part, etc. The matrix numbers for the set are RR-7034 through RR-7039.

9. SCREEN GUILD SHOW - February 5, 1939

Many motion picture stars made it a regular practice to appear, gratis, on special broadcasts that supported or promoted specific charities or other causes. One such cause, enthusiastically supported by the movie industry, was the Motion Picture Relief Fund.

At the beginning of 1939, a series of broadcast programs, sponsored by the Gulf Oil Company, began regular weekly presentations supporting the Motion Picture Relief Fund. Members of the Screen Guild, including movie stars and others in the industry, appeared on these broadcasts. Some programs were devoted to radio adaptations of motion pictures, while

others were variety programs.

The fifth program in the series, broadcast February 5, 1939, was such a "variety" program, featuring the talents of Bing Crosby, Hugh Herbert, The Yacht Club Boys, and Jane Withers. George Murphy served as master of ceremonies for the program, also appearing in some skits. The sponsor of the broadcasts had the programs recorded by Radio Recorders in Hollywood, and presentation copies of the resulting program records were given to the performers who had volunteered their time and services. On this program Bing sang three songs, "This Can't Be Love", "I Have Eyes", and "Small Fry", the latter as part of a skit with Jane Withers and George Murphy.

The records, recorded at 78 rpm, were pressed on seven 12-inch sides, with matrix numbers RR-7095 through RR-7101. Part 4 is single-sided while the other parts are coupled as two-sided pressings. The labels are white with blue printing, showing an illustration of the proposed rest home for the picture industry, presented by Gulf Oil Corp., Produced by Young & Rubicam.

10. LADY ESTHER SCREEN GUILD PROGRAMS

Another series of Screen Guild programs, supporting the Motion Picture Relief Fund, was produced in the early-to-mid 1940's.



As with the earlier series, presentation copies of each broadcast were recorded and pressed for the artists who volunteered their time and services for each program. The sponsor for this series, Lady Esther, also had special albums printed to hold each set of records, with each special album specifically printed for the

individual stars of each broadcast. As examples, the album containing the Screen Guild broadcast of "Holiday Inn" has "Thank You Dinah Shore" printed on the cover, along with the title of the program, the date, and "Compliments of Lady Esther". The albums for "Birth Of The Blues" and "Going My Way" similarly have "Thank You Johnny Mercer" and "Thank You George Murphy", respectively, printed on the album covers, along with the dates, etc., of those broadcasts.

The records are all 12-inch, two-sided 78 rpm discs, with blue printing on white labels, identifying stars, date, and program title.

Matrix numbers for "Holiday Inn" are RR-8144 through RR-8149 (July 11, 1943)

Matrix numbers for "Birth of the Blues" are RR-9127 through RR-9132 (September 13, 1943)

Matrix numbers for "Going My Way" are RR-10827 through RR-10832 (January 8, 1945)

I've been meaning to write about the *possibility* that Bing might have appeared on television as early as 1931.

Among the many pieces of show business ephemera that I've collected over the years are a goodly number of theatre programs.

Examining several such programs dating from late November 1931, including one for the 1931 edition of "George White's Scandals" (Apollo Theatre) and another for "Counsellor At Law" (Plymouth Theatre), I noted an advertisement that appeared in several of these printed programs.

**It makes
a lot of difference!**

The success of Pebecco Tooth Paste—like that of the radio artiste—is not due to obvious things. In Pebecco's case, it is the expensive ingredient found in no other tooth paste. It has an unusual taste and tang—at first you may not like it. But try Pebecco—realize that candy-like tastes and extravagant claims cannot benefit your teeth—and you will understand why thinking people prefer Pebecco. The results tell!

A Product of LEVIN & PINK, Inc., Bloomfield, N. J.

PEBECO

The Toothpaste for Thinking People



★ The **MOST EXPENSIVE** television programs in the world are those of the Columbia Broadcasting System, featuring Bing Crosby, Kate Smith and Harriet Lee, all high-priced stars.

★ Pebecco is the **MOST EXPENSIVE** tooth paste in the world to make...but its cost to you is no higher than that of the average dentifrice.

© Pebecco, Inc., 1932

The advertisements in question were produced for Pebecco Toothpaste ("The Toothpaste for Thinking People"). These ads centered on Pebecco using an expensive ingredient in the production of their product, likening expense to result. Earlier 1931 Pebecco advertisements focused on artistes of the Dance, specifically Pavlowa, the premiere danseuse, but in late November their advertisements focused on another form of "expensive" entertainment, the radio artiste. These advertisements feature photographs of Bing Crosby, Kate Smith and Harriet Lee, "all high priced stars".

Next to their photographs appears a most interesting caption: "The most expensive television programs in the world are those of the Columbia Broadcasting System, featuring Bing Crosby, Kate Smith and Harriet Lee, all high priced stars".

The key word in the printed caption is "*television*", and warrants further examination, as the use of the word "television" is extraordinary for this period in time. In 1931 television broadcasting was still in experimental stages, and there was no network broadcasting - nor anything like it - as we know today. Regular television broadcasting didn't appear until years later, and even then did not reach much of a public audience until the late 1940's. But, here it is mentioned in 1931. While the word "television" was generally well known, it was still considered a thing of the future at that time. Surely, the advertisement would have been proof-read several times before being submitted for publication. And just as surely, representatives who managed the careers of Bing, Kate Smith and Harriet Lee must have reviewed the proposed use of their images before they were used, along with any captions that would accompany their images. Also, The Columbia Broadcasting Company would also have been aware of the use of their name and of the stars they had under contract. With all these things considered, it's difficult to imagine that the use of the word was any sort of mistake.

So, how did this come about? The answer might simply be that Bing, Kate Smith and Harriet Lee *did* appear on television in 1931. While I cannot recall the exact source among the thousands of books and periodicals that inhabit my home, I do recall reading that Columbia (CBS) *was* doing experimental broadcasting in 1931, and that these broadcasts took the form of simply focusing a television camera to broadcast the images of live radio programs as they were taking place. Such limited, experimental television broadcasting would only have been viewable in New York City, where they originated; and, even then, only viewable by the relatively tiny handful of people who might have owned such early television receivers. Further, such broadcasts would not have occurred regularly, but only when experimental apparatus was being used or tested. This may be why we've never heard of such broadcasts. Practically no one saw them, and they certainly weren't a regular feature being covered by the news media of the time. Perhaps all that remains are these printed advertisements, that only appeared in the last week or two of November 1931 (these advertisement also only appeared in New York City).

Much of this is, of course, conjectural, but is based on the little evidence at hand, accompanied by factors known to have existed at the time. Perhaps, hopefully, another reader might be able to shed further light on this topic and possibility?

John Newton

(Editor: John certainly comes up with some rare items and now Bing on TV in 1931! Looking at some old 1931 newspapers, it seems that some TV broadcasts were indeed taking place in Pennsylvania and New York at that time so perhaps Bing was featured briefly. Anyone know more?)

Bing News from Carolyn in Las Vegas

Carolyn Schneider, Bing's niece, tells us about her Bing activities.

There is no doubt about it; the month of December belongs to Bing Crosby, here in the United States at least. While I can't speak for the rest of the world, in America virtually every radio station was broadcasting Bing songs. It seems to set the tone for the Christmas season, and the format begins as early as December first.

In keeping with the media rush to establish the Holiday mood, it seemed appropriate then, for the Bing Crosby Film Festival in Spokane to be held on December 4th. My husband and I attended this fourth annual event, which proved to be the winner so far regarding crowd attendance. All during the festival, my new book, "Bing: On the Road to Elko" was available to theatre-goers and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the people and autographing their books. My cousin Howard Crosby took to the stage of the theatre and gave the audience a resumé of his relationship with Uncle Bing. I had my turn at doing the same a bit earlier and we both received a warm reception from the people of Bing's hometown.

The Advocates of the Bing Crosby Theatre are a group of dedicated volunteers for whom I cannot give enough praise. The word "superb" is a fitting description of the job well done by these men and women. From planning to publicity and beyond, the group not only hosted the event and provided warm hospitality, but also served refreshments.

A popular entertainer for many years and a huge Bing Crosby fan is **Regis Philbin** (see BING # 152, page 6). His visit to the Crosbyana room at Gonzaga prompted me to make sure he received a copy of my first book "ME and Uncle Bing". Regis was kind enough to mention it on his TV program in New York, and even held it up to the camera for everyone to see! Subsequently, when I learned that he was coming here to Las Vegas to tape four of his shows, I set about trying to meet him and autograph a copy of my new book, "Bing: On the Road to Elko". To my surprise, I received an email saying that Regis would love to have me attend one of the show tapings and then to visit with him backstage afterword. I must say I enjoyed the VIP treatment and front row tickets. When I met Regis, he was very warm and friendly, and complimented me on the book I had already given him. He said he had read

other books about Uncle Bing but he especially liked mine because it was written by a family member and "showed Bing from a different angle."



Carolyn meets Regis.

Upon the release of my new book in October, I have been making author-signing appearances at various clubs and coffee houses. It is truly amazing the number of people who come to meet me and share their stories of remembrances of Uncle Bing. One of my book signings took place at Holy Family Church (the story of Bing's financial help to build this church is in chapter seven of "Bing: On the Road to Elko" entitled *Pennies from Heaven*).

February brings the annual Book Fair, and in April I am featured at the Las Vegas Public Library event, "Meet the author". After my presentation, the film *Here Comes the Groom* is shown, (reference to chapter six of Bing: On the Road to Elko" entitled *In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening*). As I continue my quest in promoting the legacy of my uncle Bing, I'm hoping the ICC will have an increase in membership and interest in the Greatest Entertainer of the 20th Century.

Carolyn Schneider

(Editor: Thanks, Carolyn and well done for finalising the arrangements for us to have Regis Philbin as an honorary member. It's great to have him on board. Carolyn is to be a guest on the PBS showing of *The Legendary Bing Crosby* in Las Vegas.

For further information about Carolyn's book, see <http://bingcrosbybooks.com/>

The book can be obtained direct from Carolyn at 9811 W. Charleston Blvd. #2-185, Las Vegas, Nevada 89117 (phone: 702-240-8570 or email: artist71635@msn.com).

Due to a special arrangement with the publisher Carolyn requests that you order the book directly from her. Carolyn will gladly autograph and inscribe the book to all purchasers. UK, EU and Ireland members should order through Michael Crampton.)

Celluloid Crosby

In time I hope that all of Bing's films will receive a mention in this column. Even those with little merit will feature. There are a couple of Crosby pictures which I find hard going to watch from beginning to end. I intend to get them both out of the way now. Bing's presence in any movie is worth viewing but sometimes the non-Crosby elements are unworthy of him. So in this issue of BING I will cover a Crosby feature and a supporting programmer that represent what would amount to a wasted evening at the cinema for me.

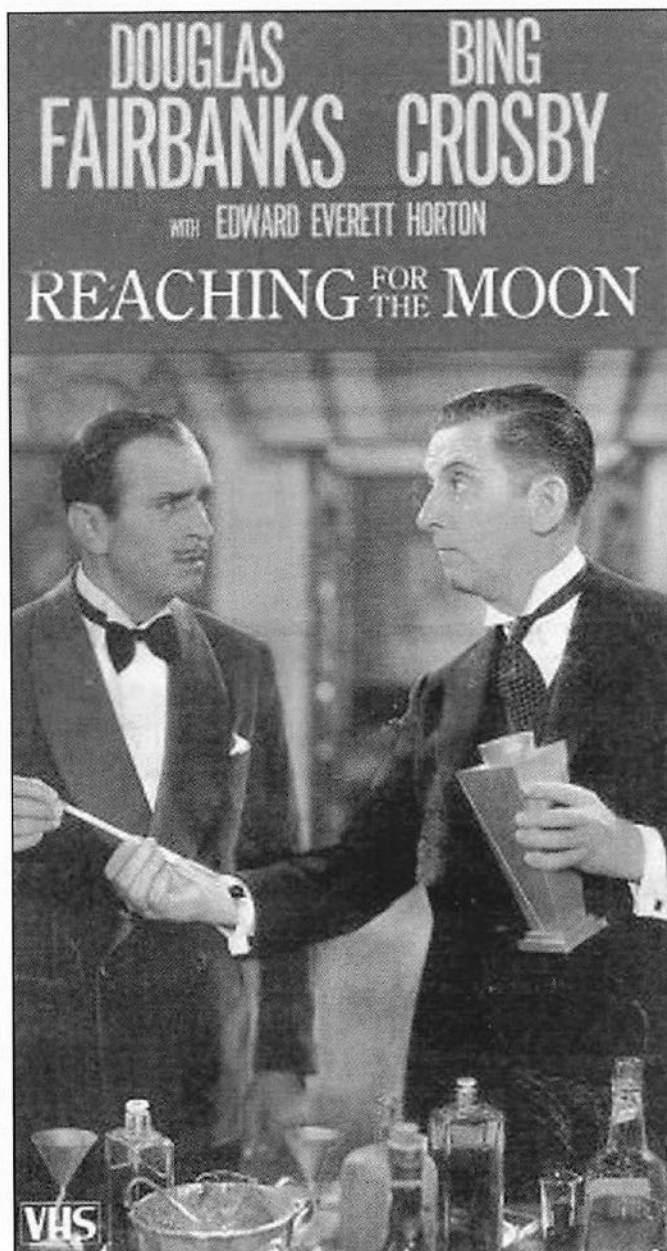
First off, the main film. Extract the Bing segment from *Reaching for the Moon* and what is left isn't much cop. That is not an opinion shared by everyone. Leonard Maltin's "Movie and Video Guide" calls it an enjoyable Depression comedy, although I notice that he is referring to the heavily edited 62 minute version as opposed to the original theatrically released-film which has a running time of 91 minutes. Maltin's opinion is not shared by Steven H. Scheuer in his "Movies on TV" book. He calls the film "a dated, flat comedy". I side with Scheuer. Revisiting *Reaching for the Moon* the other night on a 66 minute DVD version it was hard to resist using the fast forward button on the remote control.

I tried to put myself in the mind frame of a cinemagoer of some eighty years ago. The attraction to buy a ticket in 1930 might have been inspired by Douglas Fairbanks heading the cast list. Fairbanks was a major force during the silent era and to see how he fared in a talkie would have some novelty value. In 1929 he made a successful transition from silent cinema when he played Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1929). He needed to follow that well received film to confirm he was still a major force in movies. Until the end of the silent era his box-office triumphs had been in action roles where his athletic skills were well to the fore. A Doug Fairbanks actioner with clever dialogue was called for. Instead he elected to make *Reaching for the Moon*.

Reaching for the Moon was a 1917 Fairbanks film which the reference books tell us was remade as a talkie late in 1930. The way things developed proves that it was not quite so straightforward. Fairbanks was a founder member of United Artists, the production company involved with both versions of the film. The talking version credits Joseph M. Schenck as producer. In reality Schenck was an employee of Fairbanks. Fairbanks should be regarded as senior co-producer. Schenck was approached by Irving Berlin with a proposition. Berlin had taken the broad outline of the 1917 film and re-written the story as "Lucky Break". He planned to interpolate eight songs into the screenplay. In addition he made a pitch to Schenck to allow him to provide his services to United Artists as the film's

supervisor. Berlin's narrative involved an aviatrix enjoying a romance on board a Transatlantic liner. There was a topical hook in that the action would take place shortly after the Wall Street crash of 1929 and the leading man would play the part of a business tycoon.

It was when Schenck and Berlin presented their project to Fairbanks that things started to become iffy. Fairbanks decreed that *Reaching for the Moon* would be his next film. That Fairbanks cast himself in a musical when he had no vocal skills went unchallenged. Fairbanks then expressed a wish to hire Bebe Daniels as his leading lady. The fact that Daniels had a light soprano voice and was ill equipped to credibly carry off a singing role in a musical must have tempted the yes men at United Artists to say no. But this was the Depression and jobs were hard to come by.



Casting progressed and Ginger Rogers and Jack Whiting were pencilled in as secondary leads. Additionally, as the film was primarily a musical, Busby Berkeley was to stage the dance routines. It was only when Edmund Goulding was appointed director that the project took the form we know. He immediately sensed that the concept of a musical would not work. He went to Fairbanks and with the blessing of his leading man he refashioned the script. The emphasis was for the film to be a romantic comedy as opposed to a musical. Elsie Janis assisted Goulding with the writing although Goulding retained the sole "written and directed by" title credit. Only one Irving Berlin composition survived: "When the Folks High up Do the Mean Low Down". Bebe Daniels was intended to sing the number in a scene set in the cocktail lounge of an ocean going liner. When it was realised that she could not do vocal justice to the song there was some urgency in finding an alternative vocalist. That leads us to Bing's brief participation in *Reaching for the Moon*.

Joseph Schenck was tipped off about a vocal trio performing at the Cocoanut Grove night club contained within the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. They were the Rhythm Boys. Bing got the job. Al Rinker and Harry Barris were not hired. The Crosby sequence had Bebe Daniels and June McCloy providing a chorus after Bing's vocal. This vocal contribution was filmed late at night after the Rhythm Boys had finished their club act. The film's musical director was Alfred Newman. In 1968 he gave a lecture in Los Angeles about recording film musicals. He said:

"In the early days of sound, ... Bing Crosby would stand in front of the camera with a microphone overhead. The orchestra would be seated out of camera range, usually about a block away. When the director gave the cue, the camera, recorder, conductor, orchestra and soloist would burst into activity, rooted to the spot, hoping desperately to stay together."

In *Reaching for the Moon* the setting required Bing to be seen fronting the orchestra.

The final budget for the film totalled \$1.1 million. This was high for the time and United Artists could not express surprise when the film lost money. The film's re-issue in 1946 was promoted as "featuring Bing Crosby" with Bebe Daniels and Douglas Fairbanks receiving no mention. Yet it was the presence of Daniels and Fairbanks that had the marquee drawing power sufficient for the Regal, Uxbridge to book *Reaching for the Moon* as its opening attraction on Boxing Day, 1931. And to ensure the ticket buying public got value for money the film was supported by a newsreel, two general interest short films, Laurel and Hardy in "Laughing Gravy" and an organ recital.

My choice of supporting film for *Reaching for the Moon* has to be *You Can Change the World* (1951). After viewing this twenty minute short the feature film can

only look good by comparison. Yet it has curiosity value via a performance of "Early American" from Bing and the presence of comedians Jack Benny and Bob Hope.



If Bing and Bob were re-united in heaven some half century after *You Can Change the World* was filmed they would do well to celebrate the success of their *Road* films rather than dwell on their contribution to the religiously themed one reeler they made for the Christophers' Association. All the film's participants worked without financial reward for the organisation that promoted the principle that all persons of influence should use their position to convert others to doing good in the world. It was an obvious propaganda piece that attracted the participation of major Hollywood performers like Irene Dunne, Ann Blyth, Paul Douglas and Loretta Young.

Both films make for tedious viewing today apart from their Crosby footage. If you are tempted to track them down on DVD, then don't endure them in their entirety as I did. Use the zapper.

Keith Parkinson

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

WANGER, WALTER [Walter Feuchtwanger] (1894-1968) Producer. He produced *Going Hollywood* in 1933. He seemed to turn out one high profile film every decade. There was the Marx Brothers comedy

The Cocoanuts in 1929, the John Wayne western *Stagecoach* in 1939, the drama loosely based on the marriage of Bing and Dixie Lee, *Smash up*, in 1947, the intelligent science fiction thriller *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* in 1956 and the financially disastrous *Cleopatra* in 1963. He was sacked as producer of that final epic and then withdrew from film making. His own life story would make a good film. He was with American Army Intelligence during World War 1. He was production chief at Paramount, Columbia and M-G-M before going independent. He married actress Joan Bennett in 1940 and served a prison sentence for shooting her lover in a jealous rage some ten years later.

WARNER BROTHERS PICTURES INC.

Film studio. Bing was in one film released by Warner Bros. That was *Robin and the 7 Hoods* (1964). There was the Warner Bros. short *The Shining Future* which was released in 1944 but this was not so much entertainment as an enticement to buy war bonds. Four Warner brothers formed the studio in 1923 and established the right to control a major studio when they gambled on introducing sound with *The Jazz Singer* in 1927. In the 1930s Warners were noted for their gangster pictures which featured James Cagney, George Raft, Humphrey Bogart and Edward G. Robinson. Edward G. returned to Warners for a surprise bit part in *Robin and the 7 Hoods*. But by the time *Robin* was made several of the Hollywood studios had lost their pioneering founders and were controlled by conglomerates. Warner Bros. merged with Seven Arts and in 1989 a merger with the publishing group Time Inc. saw the formation of Time-Warner. At the dawn of the 21st. century the internet service America Online merged with the film studio and AOL Time-Warner was the result. AOL and Time Warner formally split in 2009 after almost 10 years as one company.

WARREN, HARRY [Salvatore Guaragna] (1893-1981) Composer. Twenty years separated the Bing Crosby films to which Harry Warren made a contribution. *Please* (1933) included "You're Getting to Be a Habit with Me", for which Al Dubin provided the lyrics and *Just For You* (1952) on which Leo Robin put words to the full song score. The Bing vocals from *Just For You* were "I'll Si-si Ya in Bahia", "Call Me Tonight", "Zing a Little Zong" (duetted with Jane Wyman), "The Live Oak Tree", "Just for You" and "On the Ten-Ten from Ten-Ten-Tennessee" (duetted with Ben Lessy). By the time he worked on *Just For You* Warren had a major body of work on his c.v. There were the Warner Bros. musicals from the 1930s like *42nd Street* (1933) and *Dames* (1934). Then he worked on the Glenn Miller films for 20th Century-Fox in the early 1940s: *Sun Valley Serenade* (1941) and *Orchestra Wives* (1942). His Paramount work following *Just For You* found him an ideal writer of melodies for Dean Martin on the Martin and Lewis comedies *The Caddy* (1953) and *Artists and*

Models (1955). The 1975 biography of Warren, "Harry Warren and the Hollywood Musical", written by Tony Thomas, prevents any under-estimation of Warren's contribution to popular music.

WASHINGTON, NED (1901-1976) Lyricist.

The prolific Washington has only one entry in the Bing Crosby film song discography. That is "I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance" featured in the short *Please* (1933). It is a significant composition because the melody was a collaboration between Bing and Victor Young. It was to be 1940 before Ned Washington made an unforgettable impact on listeners. He co-wrote the songs for the Disney cartoon feature *Pinocchio* with Leigh Harline. Disney used him again the following year on *Dumbo*. His ballad for the film *High Noon* guaranteed the film's success when the title song, with music by Dimitri Tiomkin, received frequent airplay throughout the summer of 1952. Tex Ritter and Frankie Laine had the hit recordings.

WASN'T I THERE Song. A forgotten (and forgettable) Burke and Van Heusen song written for *Mr. Music* (1950). Bing, as composer Paul Merrick, wrote it for himself to sing in the film. Celebrating finishing the score for a new show, Bing sang a few lines of the song before being joined by Peggy Lee in a rendition of "Life is So Peculiar".

WATKIN, PIERRE (1887-1960). Character actor who was one of a stable of tall, distinguished-looking and sophisticated character actors whom Hollywood kept steadily employed playing political leaders, army officers, lawyers, wealthy businessmen and the like. Pierre Watkin had bit parts in three Bing films; *Waikiki Wedding* (1937), *Road to Singapore* (1940) and *Rhythm on the River* (1940) where he played Uncle John and is seen early on in the film at a party. He was in films for twenty years without anyone paying much attention to him. He is probably most memorable as Mr. Skinner, the banker, in the W. C. Fields comedy *The Bank Dick* (1940), wherein he uttered the now-classic line "Allow me to give you a hearty handclasp." He retired from the big screen in the mid 1950s.

WATSON, LUCILE (1879-1962) Actress. *The Emperor Waltz* (1948) concludes with Bing winning Joan Fontaine and Roland Culver having to settle for Lucile Watson. Culver was Count Von Stolzenberg-Stolzenberg and Watson plays Princess Bitotska. It was no happy ending for Culver because Lucile Watson was usually given film parts due to her haughty presence and plain looks. She cropped up playing matronly types in pictures from 1934 (*What Every Woman Wants*) through to 1951 (*My Forbidden Past*). Her career highlight occurred in 1943 when she received an Academy Award nomination playing Bette Davis' mother in *Watch on the Rhine*.



Princess Bitotska disapproves of Bing and his dog

WEBSTER, PAUL FRANCIS (1907-1984)

Lyric writer. He put the words to Sammy Fain's melody for the title song from the 1957 drama *Man on Fire*. Bing is heard singing the song over the opening credits. Not exactly the sort of tune that goes around and around in your head after leaving the cinema, even when the Ames Brothers provide a reprise over the closing credits. Frankie Vaughan made a U.K. cover version. Webster wrote lyrics to order. Those orders usually came from film producers who hoped for extra publicity if a title song made the hit parade. It was not always a simple task. "Love is a Many Splendored Thing" was not a catchy in-your-face sentiment. But he managed to turn "Friendly Persuasion" into a less than obvious statement of love and "April Love" was a traditional romantic ballad. Webster's Hollywood career began in 1936 with songs for the Bobby Breen musical *Rainbow on the River*. His main successes were in the 1950s. He helped the singing career of Doris Day with the songs for *Calamity Jane* (1953) and Mario Lanza when Lanza provided the singing voice of Edmund Purdom for *The Student Prince* (1954). His song "The Shadow of Your Smile" from *The Sandpiper* (1965) won him an Oscar and found itself a place in the Great American Songbook.

Keith Parkinson

Bing Crosby's Russian Adventure

Martin McQuade has found some more items of interest.

This reporter has recently learned about an ongoing effort by Dave Strohmaier and Randy Gitsch, producers of the documentary *Cinerama Adventure*, to restore *Bing Crosby's Russian Adventure*. This film was an attempt to emulate the many American widescreen travelogues made in the three-strip process of Cinerama. The Soviet filmmakers secured the rights to this widescreen format to make a glorified tour of Mother Russia; and to ensure its success they enlisted Crosby to narrate (he only appears on screen in the opening segment, strumming a balalaika and crooning a few bars of a Russian melody.) Even this didn't help, and amidst Cold War tensions this

expansive cultural exchange effort lost fifteen million dollars.



By the time of the 1966 release of *Russian Adventure* in the United States, Cinerama was no longer projected onto three screens. Rather it was transferred to 70 millimeter in order to adapt to most road show theaters. According to Mr. Strohmaier, there was only one American theater at that time with the necessary installation, in Chicago, which ran the film in the intended three panel version.

It has been long thought that this was lost forever. But Mr. Strohmaier acted on a tip and found the complete feature, except for the prologue, stored in a trailer in Los Angeles where a sample reel was recently screened. This cinematic sleuth, also involved in the restoration of *How the West Was Won*, (another Cinerama film associated with Crosby) believes the complete film may exist in Russia. He and Mr. Gitsch are exploring ways of maintaining and exhibiting their print which has suffered from the dreaded vinegar corrosion. Surely Crosby, whose multiple screen *Experiences* in New York, San Francisco and elsewhere were the direct heirs of Cinerama, would wish these persistent preservationists Godspeed.

In 1944, Frank Tashlin's Warner Brothers animated short, *Swooner Crooner*, was nominated for an Academy Award. In 1959, while Tashlin was directing *Say One for Me*, Crosby heard of his animation work at Warner Brothers and made a comment that he did not like his

image in that notorious cartoon. Tashlin remarked that he drew that very caricature!
Source: *Toonheads*. Episode: "Tish Tash, Director Frank Tashlin." Cartoon Network.

From the trailer for *On the Waterfront*:

"The management of this theater believes "On the Waterfront" is one of the truly great pictures of our time. Superb acting inspired directing and a story as warm and moving as **Going My Way (but with brass knuckles!)** make "On the Waterfront" an achievement that will be long remembered as outstanding motion picture entertainment. We urge you to see it."

Martin McQuade

The Bing Crosby Show 1954-56

In our last issue, we promised to give further details of the recording sessions undertaken for Bing's radio show during 1954-56. The information has kindly been provided by Robert Bader of Bing Crosby Enterprises and is listed below. Bing certainly did a lot of work each day!

November 18, 1954 - CBS Studio C, Hollywood, CA

Papa Loves Mambo	2:17
This Ole House	2:20
If I Give My Heart To You	3:23
Mandy	1:39
Count Your Blessings Instead Of Sheep	2:52
I'm A Fool To Care	2:52
Hey There	3:04
Anyone Can Fall In Love	2:56
I Need You Now	3:06
I Want To Be Happy	1:48
Keepin' Out Of Mischief Now	2:06
But Not For Me	2:20
Honeysuckle Rose	2:25
The Nearness Of You	2:06
Ain't Misbehavin'	2:12
Just You, Just Me	2:08
Once In A While	3:39
You Took Advantage Of Me	2:29
Ol' Man River	2:18

December 4, 1954 - CBS Studio B, Hollywood, CA

Mister Sandman (w/ Lindsay Crosby)	1:37
Thou Swell	1:46
S Wonderful	1:46
Oh, Look At Me Now	1:30
I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm	2:32
Whither Thou Goest	2:44
All Through The Night	2:58
Taking A Chance On Love	2:01
We're In The Money (version 1) (rejected)	1:38
We're In The Money (version 2)	1:39
This Can't Be Love	1:28
I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me	1:24
Love Is The Sweetest Thing	2:01
Back In Your Own Backyard	2:13
I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plan	2:30

Don't Take Your Love From Me	2:55
You're In Kentucky Sure As You're Born	1:57

March 2, 1955 - CBS Studio B, Hollywood, CA

Flores Negras	2:30
Solamente Una Vez (You Belong To My Heart)	2:43
La Borrachita	2:44
Young and Foolish	3:05
My Own True Love (Tara's Theme)	3:02
Sunday	1:42
That's All I Want From You	2:22
Unsuspecting Heart	3:09
A Man Chases A Girl	2:56
Melody Of Love	1:23
Darling, Je Vous Aime, Beaucoup	3:11
How Important Can It Be?	2:17

April 6, 1955 - CBS Studio C, Hollywood, CA

I Hear Music (version 1) (rejected)	1:39
I Hear Music (version 2)	1:40
As Long As I Live	2:13
Try A Little Tenderness	3:33
Pledging My Love	2:04
What Is There To Say?	2:39
Cherry Pink And Apple Blossom White	2:36
Danger! Heartbreak Ahead	3:26

June 9, 1955 - CBS Studio C, Hollywood, CA

In A Little Spanish Town	2:13
It's A Most Unusual Day	1:55
Unchained Melody	2:46
Something's Gotta Give	1:59
I Belong To You	3:08
Keep It Gay	1:44
Just A Baby's Prayer At Twilight	3:19
Chee Chee-oo Chee (Sang The Little Bird)	2:27
You Do Something To Me	1:25

June 20, 1955 - KCBS Studio A, San Francisco, CA

Nice Work If You Can Get It	1:47
How Long Has This Been Going On?	2:44
Deed I Do	1:59
Cocktails For Two	3:01
Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea	2:00
How Am I To Know?	2:53
I Get A Kick Out Of You	2:27
I See Your Face Before Me	2:51
Lady Is A Tramp, The	2:01
I'm Yours	3:16
Get Happy	2:15
My Ideal	3:04
Gypsy In My Soul	2:05
That's The Way Love Goes	2:03

August 25, 1955 - Sound Recording Studios, Spokane, WA

I'll Never Say "Never Again" Again	2:00
It's All Right With Me	3:46
Serenade In The Night	3:34
Wake The Town And Tell The People	2:30
She's Funny That Way	3:31
If I May	2:46
Domani (Tomorrow)	2:30
I'll Never Stop Loving You	3:04
Goodnight, Sweet Dreams, Mary Lou	2:56
No Te Importe Saber (Let Me Love You Tonight)	2:40
Love Me Or Leave Me	2:20
(You Gotta Have) Heart	2:36
Swanee	2:03
Shhh In Madrid	2:26

August 26, 1955 - Sound Recording Studios, Spokane, WA

Avalon	1:41
Banjo's Back In Town, The	2:25
Blue Star (The Medic Theme)	2:54
Love Is A Many Splendored Thing	2:59
The Yellow Rose of Texas	2:44
Rock Around The Clock (with Lindsay Crosby)	2:00

December 29, 1955 - CBS Studio C, Hollywood, CA

The Tender Trap	3:08
My Blue Heaven	2:20
What Is This Thing Called Love?	2:19
When I Take My Sugar To Tea	2:57
Someone You Love	3:21
Avalon Town	2:08
There Should Be Rules	2:48
New Sun In The Sky	1:39
Love And Marriage	2:20
Merci Beaucoup	2:30

March 8, 1956 - CBS Studio B, Hollywood, CA

Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	1:47
Waitin' For the Evening Mail	2:35
Isle Of Capri	2:54
I Feel A Song Comin' On	1:21
You're The Top	2:30
Breezin' Along With The Breeze	2:07
Anything Goes	1:55
Manhattan	2:32
From This Moment On	1:53
Yours	2:56
We'll Be Together Again	2:46
My Funny Valentine	3:31
Jeannine, I Dream Of Lilac Time	3:05
Carolina In The Morning	2:11

March 14, 1956 - CBS Studio C, Hollywood, CA

Crazy Rhythm	2:08
You Turned The Tables On Me	2:24
That Old Black Magic	2:16
Arrivederci Roma	2:30
No, Not Much	2:55
Hot Diggity (Dog Ziggity Boom)	1:51
On The Alamo	2:52
Come Rain Or Come Shine	3:30
If You Can Dream	3:18
I Can't Get Started (version 1) (rejected)	3:16
I Can't Get Started (version 2)	3:15
Little Man, You've Had a Busy Day	2:45
I've Got A Crush On You	2:07

April 4, 1956 - Palm Springs, CA

Margie	2:33
Yes Sir! That's My Baby	2:43
Object Of My Affection, The	2:56
Sometimes I'm Happy	2:08
When My Baby Smiles At Me	2:00
I Got Rhythm	2:01
Just Around The Corner	3:36
Strike Up The Band	2:04
Muskrat Ramble	2:17
That's A-Plenty	1:57
At The Jazz Band Ball	2:15
Smiles	2:11
I'd Climb The Highest Mountain	2:14
My Baby Just Cares For Me	2:35

May 17, 1956 - Monterey, CA

Because (version 1)	1:54
Because (version 2) (rejected)	1:49
Love's Old Sweet Song	1:42

Smilin' Through

2:01

June 18, 1956 - CBS Studio B, Hollywood, CA

Fine And Dandy	1:44
Georgia On My Mind	3:18
Alabama Bound	1:51
When The Red, Red Robin Comes Bobbin' Along	2:03
You're Driving Me Crazy	2:52
On The Street Where You Live	2:30
If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight)	2:16
I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face	2:41
Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise	3:21
Too Marvelous For Words	2:31
Moonglow (Theme From Picnic)	3:16

August 22, 1956 - Sound Recording Studios, Spokane, WA

Chinatown, My Chinatown	1:37
I Wish You Love	3:01
Lullaby Of Broadway	2:42
I Almost Lost My Mind	2:53
You're Sensational	3:20
Born To Be With You	3:19
Then I'll Be Happy	2:29
Don't Blame Me	3:36
My Heart Stood Still	3:12
L'Amour, Toujours, L'Amour (Love Everlasting)	2:04
Button Up Your Overcoat	1:49
Allegheny Moon (duet with Lindsay Crosby)	2:46
Big D (duet with Lindsay Crosby) version 1 (rejected)	2:17
Big D (duet with Lindsay Crosby) version 2	2:17

August 23, 1956 - Sound Recording Studios, Spokane, WA

Chicago	2:02
Get Me To The Church On Time	2:21
More Than You Know	2:32
Cheek To Cheek	2:00
I'm Confessin' That I Love You	3:42
They Didn't Believe Me	2:56

So which tracks are not on the new Mosaic issue? Well, David Currington has collated them for us and here they are. Those marked with an asterisk appear on the new Collectors' Choice CDs.

Tracks not included in Mosaic Issue

Papa Loves Mambo *
This Ole House
Mister Sandman (w/ Lindsay Crosby)
Whither Thou Goest *
We're in the Money (version 1) (rejected)
Flores Negras*
Solamente Una Vez (You Belong To My Heart) *
La Borrachita *
I Hear Music (version 1) (rejected)
Pledging My Love *
Chee Chee-oo Chee (Sang the Little Bird)
No Te Importe Saber (Let Me Love You Tonight) *
The Banjo's Back in Town
The Yellow Rose of Texas *
Rock Around the Clock (with Lindsay Crosby)
Hot Diggity (Dog Ziggity Boom)
I Can't Get Started (version 1) (rejected)
Because (version 1) *
Because (version 2) (rejected)
Love's Old Sweet Song *
Smilin' Through *
Born To Be with You
Allegheny Moon (duet with Lindsay Crosby)
Big D (duet with Lindsay Crosby) version 1 (rejected)
Big D (duet with Lindsay Crosby) version 2

One Sweet Letter From You

Members' views, opinions and comments are always welcomed and we have great pleasure in reproducing some of the letters received since the last issue

Trevor Wagstaff, Hornchurch, Essex, UK

Nice talking with you the other day. I mentioned being on the phone to George O'Reilly regarding the interview on BBC-TV when Jeremy Paxman spoke to Paul Gambaccini about Michael Jackson's passing. At the end, Paxman said to Paul, "Was Michael Jackson the greatest entertainer of the 20th century?"

Paul replied, "No! Bing Crosby was No. 1, Elvis Presley No.2 and Frank Sinatra No. 3."

George said, "Ask Malcolm to put this in BING magazine, please."

Paul Gambaccini being such a Pop music authority, this fact will be a nice one to quote, and for The Guinness Book of Records I feel.

Mike O'Donoghue, Essex, UK

May I say how much pleasure I always get when the postman delivers the latest issue of BING...long may it continue.

In the A to Z of Bing's movies I noticed that Charles Walters is quoted as co director of the film *Meet Me In St Louis*. If you consult Google you will find that Vincente Minnelli was the sole director of the film in which his wife, Judy Garland, starred. Just thought I would put the record straight.

(Editor: Mike is right. Charles Walters was only the dance director on the film. Good spot!)

Graham Pascoe, Bathurst, NSW, Australia

BING number 153 has, as usual, interesting articles and a thought-provoking contribution from Norman Wolfe. His second point about the shrinking interest in Bing's contribution to popular entertainment and music is one which must have exercised most of our minds from time to time. It's discouraging, isn't it. However, it seems to me that popular music is essentially ephemeral. When Bing recorded 'Just one more chance' in 1931 and the other 'classic' recordings of the era, did he suspect that someone might like to listen to the records almost eighty years later? Surely not! Perhaps in years to come some folk who are interested in the history of popular music and so-called standards such as 'Star dust', 'Way down yonder in 'New Orleans' and 'Suspense' (only kidding!) will hear Bing's interpretations.

Norman's seventh point rightly congratulates all of the enthusiasts who contribute to the ICC and the marvellous BING magazine. By reading it, by attending meetings such as you hold at Leeds and David Currington hosts at his home in Sydney, and by visiting

the Bing Crosby Internet Museum site, we can all physically or vicariously 'share the experience' to use Bert Bishop's term in the context of the recent Leeds meeting.

Interesting to read in *Bing on the Box* that 'Deep in the Heart of Texas' was banned by the BBC. I don't think that happened in Australia but Dinah Shore's 'Doin' what comes naturally' from *Annie Get Your Gun* was banned from radio broadcast here in 1947. In the recent Christmas-New Year season, ABC-TV showed the US series *Make 'Em Laugh* hosted by Billy Crystal and Bing and Bob Hope turned up in at least one episode.

Howard Crosby, Walla Walla, Washington, USA (as seen on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum)

I just love the magazine. I really look forward to getting each copy. And I would like to express my thanks to all of the volunteers who work so hard to make it a reality!

Sue Horn, Lawrenceville, GA, USA (as seen on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum)

Great issue...About the cover photo, does anyone know the background information on that? Bing certainly does look older in it, and I wonder what the context was. Back photo is of a younger Bing.

How much more is left of the A-Z of Bing in film? Will that be published as a book once we get through the alphabet? It is one of the best regular parts of the magazine. I wonder what will replace it? The A-Z of Bing in another context?

I encourage everyone to renew their membership quickly or join up if you haven't, because these magazines are amazing in terms of the content and the quality of the printing. What a great group we belong to.

I ordered the calendar for 2010, one copy for home and one for the office.

(Editor: We don't have precise information about the cover photo but we believe that it was taken at Pebble Beach in the 1970s. We are indeed nearing the end of the mammoth A-Z series from Keith Parkinson which started in 1989. We should like to issue it as a book with plenty of glossy photos but this would be an expensive item (like the TV book) and it may be difficult to obtain a reasonable level of sales because of this. Knowing who has the copyright on any photos we use will be a problem too. We have it in mind though. Sadly, calendar sales reduce each year and we may have to decide not to produce one for 2011.

Wig had an interesting letter from Barry Birch which we thought we'd share with you.)

Barry Birch, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

I am enclosing my renewal for 2010 and wanted to take this opportunity to, again, congratulate you and your colleagues for the high quality of the club magazine. Issue after issue, the articles remain interesting and, notably, so well researched. Over the years, my interest in "all things Bing" and my respect for this great entertainer have increased immeasurably, because of the information garnered from your magazine.

I also wanted to let you know of the progress of our nostalgia radio station in Winnipeg. We are now into our 3rd year of broadcasting, playing music from the 30's to the 70's. We operate as a co-operative, and presently have over 500 members. We presently don't have a license to operate full-time, but are allowed to broadcast for 28 days each month as a special events radio station. We also move our broadcast site each month, usually setting up at a charitable institution, which acts as our host sponsor for the month. We have enough "volunteer" announcers and operators to broadcast 12 hours each day for 3 of the 4 weeks. For the rest of the time we provide music from our computer database. Each weeknight, for the 4 weeks, we play an hour of old radio shows, which are usually American radio shows from the 40's. Our signal strength is only 50 watts, which doesn't allow our signal to stretch much beyond the edge of Winnipeg. We have applied for a full-time license and are looking for more volunteers. This means that the above will probably change over the next few years.

It might interest your readers to know that our signal is available on the internet at www.cjnu.ca. Even though our station goes off the air, locally, each month for a few days, the music will continue, non-stop, on the internet. There are over 50 of Bing's songs included in the computer database, so we do get to hear him occasionally.

Over the holiday season, we broadcast many of the old Christmas radio shows, and, of course, several of Bing's Christmas shows were included.

Although not really a radio announcer, I am still doing a 3 hour show once a week and I try to include Bing in my playlist for each show. My interests involve playing only music from the 30's to the 50's. On Bing's birth date or the date of his death, I will usually play 4 or 5 of Bing's songs on my show closest to that date. I'm "on the air" from 1 PM to 4 PM on Wednesday afternoons. On Remembrance Day last year, I played a full "Mail Call" show with Bing as host, from 1944.

If anyone at the station is looking for a Bing Crosby tune, they will usually give me a call. My collection of Bing's music just seems to keep on growing. That new set put out by Mosaic looks awfully appealing.

Again, many thanks for all your work through the year

on behalf of the International Club Crosby.

Alan Matheson, by email from Vancouver, Canada

Thank you for publishing the LP cover from the Russian pressing of "El Senor Bing" along with my e-mailed letter. That was a great issue of BING and it came the same week that the Mosaic set arrived here, too. I have to say that I appreciate the style and tone of the magazine and it proves that print journalism cannot truly be replaced by the internet. As it turned out, that Russian pressing proved to be better than the well-worn MGM copy I have and I'd love to see this album "digitized" in CD form for others to enjoy.

As well, I've had a chance to finally listen to the current Sepia CD (Vol. 4) and "Hush A Bye" has to be the main revelation for me, musically. What a great performance from Bing and the Fred Waring organization. I didn't know this track at all until this CD, and for me, this is one of Bing's most nuanced and subtle performances ever. His control of dynamics match the great recording he did of "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" from 1938 where he sings with amazing energy and assurance at a *pianissimo* dynamic. There are very few singers now or then who could demonstrate such mastery regardless of musical style or idiom. He repeats this feat on "Hush A Bye" as well and it's amazing to think that he overdubbed his part somewhere in Idaho!

I'm very glad that there's such genuine and deserved excitement about the Mosaic set. I asked the library at the college I teach at to order this set and they did. It will be an essential resource to our young musicians at the school.

John Newton, by email from Wilmington, Delaware, USA

I read Bob Achorn's article on the song, "Crooner's Lullaby" with great interest (BING issue #153); and, unfortunately, am unable to report any positive news on the possibility that Bing might have recorded the song for one of his Paramount films.

Regarding Bing and "lost" songs, I checked my notes and draft of the introduction to my project on documenting Bing's "movie records", and found nothing at all to indicate, or even suggest, that Bing ever recorded that song.

While searching, I again re-read my notes regarding conversations and correspondence I had with Sam Coslow decades ago. Mr. Coslow and I began correspondence when he wrote to me many years ago. He had been searching for copies of sheet music for some of his own early, obscure compositions, and someone put him in touch with me. I was able to locate a couple of pieces for him, mailed them off to him, and received a kindly telephone call, thanking me profusely for my help. In another conversation I asked him about a recording, featuring both Bing and himself, and we got to talking about other film songs. I specifically asked about "I Guess It Had to Be That Way", which he had

written (with Arthur Johnston) for Bing's 1933 film, *Too Much Harmony*. I remember asking, "... whatever happened to that song?", because I had a copy of the original pressbook and knew that pre-release publicity for the film listed that song as being featured in the film.

He remembered that the song had been filmed, but he didn't recall any specific details of the setting or intended placement in the film, and also couldn't recall why the song was subsequently cut from the film. Mr. Coslow commented that songwriters on staff at Hollywood studios frequently wrote many songs that never made it into films.

A few weeks after that conversation I received a package in the mail from Sam Coslow. Inside was a 12-inch Victor record with a plain white label, with handwritten information stating "Don't Look at Me That Way - By Sam Coslow & Al Siegel". The recording was a vocal, sung by Mr. Coslow with piano accompaniment by his co-writer, Al Siegel. Mr. Coslow explained that this was a "demo" recording made for Paramount Pictures while he was writing for that studio. He didn't remember the film for which this song was intended, also commenting that composers and lyricists occasionally made such "demonstration" records so that the studio's music department might consider their songs for current or future film productions.

Recalling this brought to mind another song, by another songwriting team who wrote some of Bing's greatest hits. Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger wrote a song entitled "You're a Blessing to Me" for Bing's 1934 film, *Here Is My Heart*. It wasn't used in that film, and they attempted to have it used the following year in *Four Hours To Kill*. The song didn't make it into that film either. They next tried to have it used in *Waikiki Wedding*, but, again, it wasn't used. Two further attempts were made to consider the song for Paramount's productions of *Cocoanut Grove* and *Give Me A Sailor* (both released in 1938). Robin & Rainger also made a demo record of this song, similar to the one Sam Coslow had made. The song is pleasant enough, and I've often wondered how it would have been received if Bing had worked his vocal magic on it for one of his films.

I seem to have strayed off on a tangent, so getting back to Bing's film songs, we're fortunate, I think, that at least some of the songs that were subsequently "cut" from Bing's films still exist. "The House Jack Built for Jill", a charming duet that Bing recorded with co-star Frances Farmer exists in the form of a 12-inch production pressing. Bing himself made a "demo" of "Where Is Central Park?" for what ultimately became *Sing You Sinners*; it wasn't used, but the song exists in the form of a 10-inch "demo" pressing. Several songs were cut from the melody-rich production *Blue Skies*, including "Say It Isn't So" and others, but still remain with us because they were pressed on production discs. Another "cut" song that has survived is "You've Been

Looking Through My Dreams", recorded by Bing for *Road To Bali*, but never appearing in the released film. One of the most interesting of all is "Poor Little G String", which Bing recorded at the very end of 1929 for MGM's planned production, *The March Of Time*. Long thought to be lost, this performance, thanks to Michael Feinstein, made its public debut on CD more than 75 years after it was originally recorded.

There is yet more to be fully and appropriately documented regarding Bing's films and film recordings made during his Hollywood years. Much remains in the form of alternate takes, promotional or "exploitation" recordings, air trailers, radio promotionals and so on.

It is this project, seemingly never ending, that I began years ago and continues to the present. Hopefully, not too far in the distant future, I'll be able to report that this "discography" work is completed, at least until another rare Bing record surfaces.

So, while "Crooner's Lullaby" unfortunately remains a Bing footnote, there's much that has survived in one form or another, and, one hopes, still more to unearth.

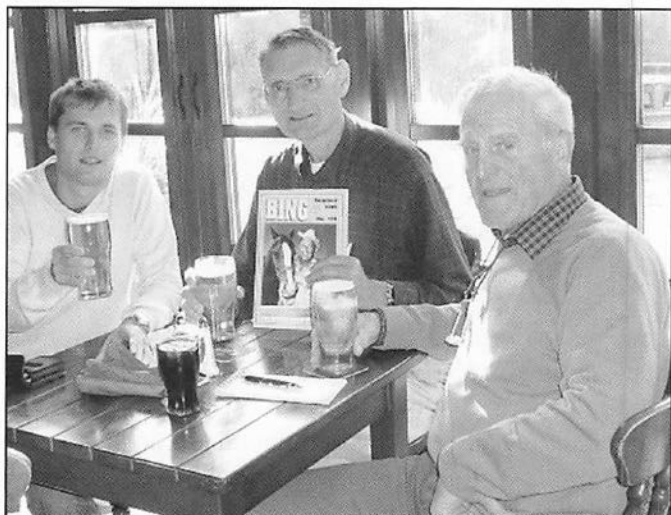
(Editor: In separate correspondence, John and I discussed the soundtrack recording of "Crooner's Lullaby" and John commented:

"I've just listened, and I like it. It's not Buddy Clark, but whoever it is certainly is imitating Bing, and doing a rather decent job while just missing the nuances that Bing himself could provide to such a number. The voice sounds somewhat familiar, like someone I've heard before, but I just cannot pinpoint that singing. It almost sounds like a voice that would have been used to imitate singers in cartoons of the period. I mean in no way to disparage the singing, as it's definitely a cut above the "average" band vocalist of the time. Of course, a decent Bing imitation has got to be a cut above the rest.")

Perry Huntoon, by email from Chicago, USA

A very belated thanks for all you did to make Leeds so successful. It was truly a wonderful gathering and a delight for me to meet so many fellow Crosby enthusiasts. In particular, I really appreciated the dinner gathering the evening prior as it broke the ice, so to speak. I attended Leeds with the expectation that this would be a once in a lifetime opportunity, but now, having made good friends there, I certainly plan to return in 2010.

An amusing vignette: as you recall, when I left Leeds, it was to begin an almost five week odyssey through the Middle East. Leaving Leeds on Monday, I took the *Eurostar* to Paris and followed with a series of overnight trains from Paris to Turkey. Having departed Budapest early one evening, I went to the cafe car for a beer and sandwich. A young Englishman, Ali, came in and we started talking. It turned out that we both had the same itinerary, namely London to



Perry (centre) with Alex Schicke (left) and Colin Stewart at Leeds.

Damascus by train. As a result, we spent a lot of time together over the next few days. From Istanbul to Adana, he had prearranged a sleeper. I was unable to do so and settled into a first class carriage. At Adana, we were to switch to another overnight train to Aleppo, Syria. Before arriving at Adana, he came up from the sleeper to advise me that the onward train had been cancelled and we would have to make other arrangements. Upon arriving at the Adana station late in the evening, I confirmed that the Adana-Aleppo train had, indeed, been discontinued. That left me, Ali and another young English gal, Sarah, stranded. Considering the late hour, we agreed that we couldn't continue further that night. Sarah had been given the name of a good hotel and we piled into a taxi to go there. Upon arrival, it seemed to make economic sense that we share a room and so arranged for a triple.

Settled in, it was close to midnight, but no one was tired and as we hardly knew each other, we started talking. When I mentioned that I began the trip in Leeds, the logical question was, why there? When I told them about the Bing Crosby meeting, I got a blank look from Ali. He seemed to have no idea who Crosby was. I hinted, *"White Christmas,"* and it still didn't register. At that moment, Sarah smiled, jumped up and said, *"Andrews Sisters, 'Pistol Packin' Mama.'"* I laughed and asked how she knew that song. She responded that she had it on her iPod, which she immediately pulled out. Finding the tune, she handed the headset to Ali, who finally got to hear Bing Crosby for the first time in his life. He smiled and said that the song had a nice beat. I found it amusing that it took an incident in the far southeast corner of Turkey to introduce someone to Bing.

Carmela Amari, Staten Island, New York, USA

Thanks for all your help with my getting back issues of BING. I'm so happy to be getting this great BING magazine again! Three years without it only made me

miss it and appreciate it more. I'm disabled now and don't work anymore so having all these BING mags to read is good therapy. Thanks to all the contributors for all the hard work that goes into each magazine. And to all Bing fans, thanks for all your input and friendship. I'm glad to be back.

Malcolm, I miss the Internet Museum.

Another Ol' Man River

I have been very impressed by Richard Baker's (also known as Jarbie) contributions to various Bing Internet sites over the years and some time ago I asked him to write something for the magazine. He has written an excellent article about the Longines set which we don't have room for this time but I thought you might like to read about some mind-blowing research he has been doing.

Ol' Man River – Unissued Take 3 (BVE 41607-3) and my ways with checking different takes.

At the end of March 2009 I was sent an e-mail by Stan Walker of Los Angeles, who drew my attention to the fact that my on line discography

(<http://www.jazzdiscography.com/Artists/Crosby/crosby.html>)

did not include any mention of take 3 of Ol' Man River and that I also failed to mention the only CD on which it appeared.

Stan pointed out that he had posted news of the existence of the take in November 2006 on Steve Lewis's Internet Museum web site, but that there had been no reaction of any sort to this posting. I was intrigued. I could find no mention of any nature of this take, and for some reason I had missed Stan's original posting. That read: -

"I just received in the mail a CD called *"Bix Restored - The Complete Recordings and Alternates - Volume 5: Newly Discovered Takes and The Beiderbecke Influence"* BXCD 13 (2005) from Sunbeam Records (www.originjazz.com). Track 1 is *"Ol' Man River"* (take 3) BVE-41607-3, a Victor unissued take. As we know, only take 2 is on the Jonzo CD. Here is a quote from the CD booklet:

"Just when we had convinced ourselves that every track was essential, we received an E-mail from Virginia collector Andy Moyer, who had discovered a shellac test of the previously unheard take 3 of Paul Whiteman's 'Ol' Man River.' Andy had acquired this pressing from an antiques dealer about nine years ago, and had been waiting patiently for someone to reissue it. After Volume 4 of Bix Restored was released, as well as the many other Bix reissues that have come out in the past several years, and none contained the track, he realized that he probably had the only copy. He contacted us and made the disc available to me for digital transfer."

I'm not a musician so I can't give you a side by side

comparison of the two takes. They are sung a little differently and the one on Jonzo is probably better, but this one is still pretty good. If you are collecting the complete Bing, you may want to get this CD from their website."

Stan Walker

Take 1 was known to have been lost or destroyed. Take 2 was the version in general circulation and issued on many LPs and CDs including the Chronological series. I checked on a number of online websites for availability of the CD in question but though it was listed, all the UK sites noted that it was "currently unavailable."

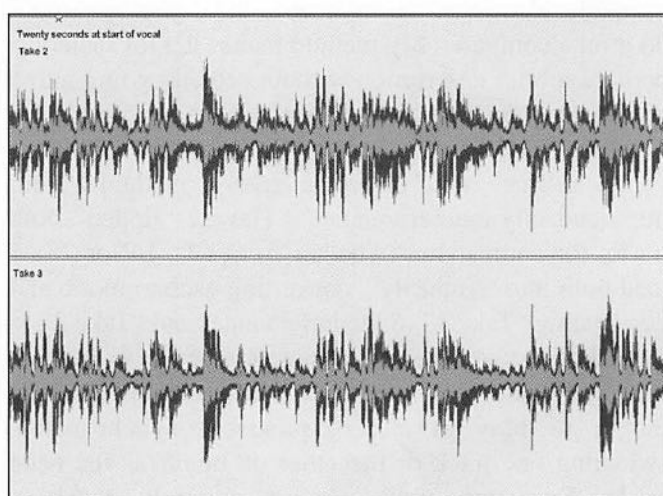


The one we knew about

As Stan had said he was unable to identify differences but thought there were some, I felt that I might give it a try even if I could not get hold of the CD, so I asked Stan if he might send me a digitised copy of the track by email. Not only did he do so but he also sent me a photo of the original 78rpm test disc included in the CD sleeve notes.

I played the track through several times in parallel and synchronised with a copy of take 2 (more on my methods later). There were clear differences in timing, one track lingering behind the other, and then catching up, so I concentrated on synchronising at the start of Bing's vocal. The two versions were very slightly tonally different, but the timing and the phrasing were all "bang on" so I was beginning to think that the two tracks were after all identical, with slight overall timing drift attributable to differences in the original transcription speeds and tonal differences to equipment used. In fact the two tracks were amazingly similar, and once the vocal parts were running in synchronisation both Bing and the band were playing in total unison phrase for phrase and note for note. I can only conclude that this is an indication of the tight discipline that Paul Whiteman exercised. Somewhat stupidly I concentrated on the

similarity of the vocal line.



The waveform comparing the first 20 seconds of the two takes of "Ol' Man River"

However, I renewed Stan's posting on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum forum and also placed one on the Bix Beiderbecke website forum, having searched both of them for any other mentions of the track. The Beiderbecke discography did indeed list it but as unissued.

There was no reaction on the BCIM website but from the "Bix" aficionados there came an immediate flurry of moderately rude and outspoken comments pointing to clear differences at 2 minutes 24 seconds and onwards, at the point that "Tram" Trumbauer's solo on the C melody sax comes in. So I re-synchronised the two tracks from that point and indeed the differences were clear – startlingly so. At that point Trumbauer produces a soaring solo with many improvised flourishes, which are wholly different on the two takes.

So far as Bing's vocal and the general orchestral backing are concerned the takes are as alike as it would be possible to get – the rhythm and melodic line are rock solid and tied to each other as near as could be imagined from two different takes. From the moment that Tram takes over they become different, but the rock solid beat continues and all come together again when the full band resumes. So for the "completists" there is another track to obtain.

The CD contains no other Crosby items but has a lot of interest to the Beiderbecke enthusiasts. Amazon UK subsequently restocked the CD and I eventually obtained a copy. The earlier volumes 1 to 4 appear to command exorbitant prices, though they are multiple disc sets. Amazon in the US seems to have a ready supply. Colin Pugh, in preparing his admirable work "Alternate Bing Crosby", now over twenty years old, went to painstaking lengths to compare different takes, using two transcription turntables and attempting to maintain synchronisation by manual adjustment of the turntable speeds, all the while listening carefully to establish where the differences lie. I take my hat off to him and bow in admiration at the patience needed! I've done it

and it is not easy, even with proper transcription quality turntables. However we are now in the digital age, and I do it on a computer. My method makes it a lot easier, so perhaps a brief description without actually going into a step by step description is warranted.

I use a software package called "Audacity" which is "open source" and therefore freely available from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>. Having "ripped" both tracks for comparison (whether from CD, LP or 78), I load both into "Audacity", converting each to mono and designating "Take 1" to the left channel and "Take 2" to right. I delete any silences at start and end of each track separately, and with luck have two tracks of the same length to play in stereo, precisely synchronised, switching one track or the other on or off as the need arises. Frequently tracks do not precisely match in length. This is almost inevitable because even minute speed drift in transcription will get the timing out, and even if the drift is only by a bar it becomes much more difficult to detect small differences. The software can still cope with this because it will stretch or squash tracks to precisely the same length as each other (without changing pitch) to within a hundredth of a second.

It is then merely necessary to listen to whatever differences occur between the left and right channels. I won't claim the process is automatic – far from it, but it

is certainly easier than the approach forced on Colin, and an added advantage is that one has a moving graphic of the waveform of each channel. Both tracks can be combined as a stereo pair and saved as demonstration examples. Sometimes, probably because of slight drift within an individual transcription, and particularly on longer tracks, the two tracks become unsynchronised again. In this case it is very simple to take portions of them, starting the comparison at a chosen key points within the music. It is all much quicker and easier to do than describe.

I use this system for comparing takes in connection with the preparation of my on line discography. There was some publicity during the course of 2007 about Joyce Hatto, a pianist who's alleged piano recordings turned out to be copies of other performances. Many of the comparisons between the supposed different performances were made using a similar approach, if with rather more sophisticated computer equipment than mine. Details can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.pristineclassical.com/HattoHoax.html>

which has links to illustrations of the waveform available to help with comparisons.

Richard Baker

(Editor: This is very impressive and thorough research by Jarbie. You'll enjoy his thoughts on the Longines set next time too.)

BING ON THE BOX

Malcolm Macfarlane surveys the TV and radio scene of the last four months.

TV highlights

USA & Canada

A good number of Bing films have been shown in the period since our last issue including:

Blue Skies	TCM
Here Comes the Groom	TCM
High Society	TCM
Holiday Inn	AMC
My Favorite Brunette	TCM
Pennies from Heaven	TCM
Riding High	TCM
Road to Bali	TCM
Road to Morocco	TCM
Road to Singapore	TCM
Road to Utopia	TCM
Road to Zanzibar	TCM
Stagecoach	AMC
That's Entertainment	TCM
The Country Girl	TCM
The Greatest Show on Earth	TCM
White Christmas	AMC

As Greg has mentioned earlier in this issue, *White Christmas*

was shown continuously on December 24th and was shown again on Christmas Day.

TCM had a mini Bing and Bob festival on January 28 when they showed five Road films. What would we do without TCM? This festival attracted a fair amount of press and Internet coverage including this on the Ivan G. Shreve, Jr. blog on January 28.

I thought I'd offer a brief heads-up and remind you that The Greatest Cable Channel Known to Mankind™ is going to take a Road trip this evening—namely, showcasing five of the popular Bob Hope-Bing Crosby-Dorothy Lamour musical comedies beginning at 8:00pm: *Road to Singapore* (1940), *Road to Zanzibar* (1941), *Road to Morocco* (1942), *Road to Utopia* (1946) and *Road to Bali* (1952).

With the exception of *Bali*—which I've seen show up quite a few times on TCM—the rest of this lineup could be considered essential viewing (and recording, particularly if you're a fan) if only because the *Road* films aren't shown too often anymore (especially since AMC has committed itself to seeing how many times they can schedule *Unforgiven* [1992] in one month). If I had to choose one and only one, I'd go with *Utopia* simply because it is, hands down, the funniest of them all. (People might argue

that **Morocco** is funnier—and while that would be my second pick, it pales in comparison to the yuks present in **Utopia**. It could be argued that **Morocco** is the best-known of the *Road* films...but certainly not the funniest. Actually, if you want to get technical—*Road to Rio* [1947] is the second funniest in the series...but since it's not being scheduled that argument is moot.) With "narration" by Robert Benchley and choice one-liners from Hope (when Crosby's character first arrives on the scene, Hope turns to the camera and cracks: "And I thought this was going to be an 'A' picture..."), **Utopia** also features great musical numbers like *Personality* and *Put it There, Pal*—plus great "menacing" support from Hillary Brooke, Douglass Dumbrille, Jack La Rue, Robert Barrat and Nestor Paiva.

TCM had originally scheduled the final film in the series, *The Road to Hong Kong* (1962), to follow **Bali** but have apparently scrapped those plans at the last minute and substituted the Hope-Lamour comedy *My Favorite Brunette* (1947) in its place. This is not a total loss (**Hong Kong** is probably the weakest entry, though **Bali** gives it some tough competition), particularly since I personally feel that **Brunette** is one of Hope's all-time best vehicles—maybe his very best; it depends on what day of the week it is. **Brunette's** a first-rate noir parody with some of the best villains ever featured in a Hope comedy: Peter Lorre, Lon Chaney, Jr., John Hoyt and the ever-so-unctuous Charles Dingle. (There's also a pair of hilarious cameos from Hollywood stars which I'll keep mum about in case you haven't seen the film.)

The black and white version of *Holiday Inn* was shown three times in December by AMC but the song "Abraham", which was done by Bing and Marjorie Reynolds in blackface, was omitted. Steven Lewis commented on this in his Bing Crosby Internet Museum:

"In cutting out the scene AMC also cut out mostly African American actors who earned some Hollywood cash with the help of Bing. The whole point of appearing in blackface for the Abraham scene was to hide the identity of Bing's character and gal pal from Fred Astaire. You recall that it was a last minute decision to go blackface when Bing learned Astaire would be in the crowd."

This brought a response from Steve Fay

"I'm quite conservative when it comes to wanting to see old films as they were made, in Black-and-White if that is the case, with restoration however if necessary. So I would rather see films with blackface segments shown with them included. But then I am not Black and can only imagine the disappointment and anger that such scenes, or any performances strongly based on the heritage of minstrelsy engenders among many African Americans. When 'Holiday Inn' was made, those implications were unknown to many white Americans and blackfaced whites singing was simply considered innocent entertainment, but there is a different consciousness today. Even if the networks were willing to show those scenes, the sponsors

would probably be shy about it."

Dennis Van Deventer also commented:

"I honestly don't see how anyone could criticize the heart-warming and touching scene in 'Holiday Inn' in which Louise Beavers teaches her kids Daphne and Vanderbilt in song about the greatness of Abraham Lincoln, and the value of freedom. Go back and listen to those inspired lyrics—written by a member of a truly oppressed minority whose family was driven from its homeland and fled to the Land Of The Free (Irving [Balin] Berlin)."



The PBS Special *The Legendary Bing Crosby* was being broadcast as we finished off this issue and **Sally Monaghan** was the first to post a brief report saying:

"I'm lucky enough to get one of the PBS stations playing the *Legendary Bing Crosby*. Everyone should try to see it. It's fantastic. Mostly, just clips with minimal talking heads. Most of these clips I've never seen before. It's fantastic. Congratulations and thanks to all involved in putting this together and getting it on the TV."

We shall have a full review in our next issue.

An important show with Bing connections was **Johnny Mercer: The Dream's On Me** and Greg Van Beek sent the following initial report. Subsequently, Bob Achorn has written more about the show as you will read later in this issue.

On November 4th, Turner Classic Movies presented a new 90 minute documentary film on the life and work of composer Johnny Mercer to commemorate the centennial of his birth. **Johnny Mercer: The Dream's On Me** was written by ICC member Ken Barnes, and was co-produced by Bruce Ricker and Howard Green. Legendary actor Clint Eastwood serves as Executive Producer. The film makes great use of archival footage from both film and TV of Mercer performing his own songs, and in interviews, including footage from BBC's

Parkinson show, as well as other performers singing Mercer tunes, such as Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, Judy Garland, Fred Astaire et al. Bing is well represented throughout, via film clips from *King of Jazz*, *Rhythm On The Range*, *Birth of The Blues*, *Here Comes The Groom*, and others, as well as footage of Bing in his dressing room at the London Palladium on June 26, 1976, paying tribute to his friend Johnny, who passed away the previous day. It is a slick, polished, well produced film, and a worthy tribute to one of American popular music's greatest composers. A special two-disc DVD set of the film was released on December 8th.

Greg Van Beek

On October 29 last year, King 5 Television of Seattle featured Bing in their *Evening Magazine* programme. In a packed 3 minutes 38 seconds segment they told us to "forget the Beatles as *Evening Magazine* pays tribute to the legend that scored the most number one hits ever!" A potted version of Bing's achievements was unveiled with Gene Stout, former pop music critic for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* filling in the blanks. Well done King 5.

USA Radio

It was great to have our new honorary member Regis Philbin returning as special guest host of *Bing Crosby Christmas Radio* which aired from December 19-25 exclusively on SIRIUS channel 105 and XM channel 151. On this special limited run holiday channel, Kathryn Crosby, Mary, Harry and Nathaniel shared memories, introduced songs and shows and reflected on Crosby's life and work. In addition, Regis shared his favorite Bing memories and anecdotes and also introduced songs and shows.

As last year, *Bing Crosby Christmas Radio* broadcast a selection of Bing's holiday radio specials recorded from 1938-1962. In addition, Regis hosted a one-hour special featuring favorite holiday songs performed by Bing and other legendary entertainers. The show featured music from performers including Dean Martin, Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and Andy Williams, plus several of Regis' own Christmas recordings including "Where Do We Go for Christmas?"

It was lovely to have Bing's Christmas shows being broadcast all day long and amongst the shows were:

The 1938 broadcast from Bing's home as his children open their presents.

Kraft Music Hall – December 24, 1942.

Command Performance – December 25, 1945

The Screen Guild shows "Holiday Inn" (January 11, 1943), "Going My Way" (January 8, 1945) and "The Bells of St. Mary's" (August 26, 1946)

Philco Radio Hall of Fame - December 24, 1944 (heavily edited) and December 23, 1945 (no Bing).

Philco Radio Time - December 25, 1946, December 17, 1947, December 24, 1947 and December 22, 1948.

Chesterfield shows – December 14, 1949, December 21, 1949, December 6, 1950, December 13, 1950, December 20, 1950 and December 19, 1951.

GE shows - December 25, 1952, December 13, 1953 and December 20, 1953.

The Bob Hope Show, December 26, 1950.

The Bing Crosby Show – December 17, 1954 and December 22, 1954.

A Christmas Sing with Bing – 1956, 1957, 1960, 1961 and 1962.

This year there were commercials in between the shows and your editor heard them so often, he almost found himself reaching for the phone to buy the product being promoted!

The next treat on Sirius followed on January 3 with the "Nancy for Frank" radio show on www.sirius.com/siriuslysinatra. Nancy Sinatra, long an advocate for her own dad's legacy, sat down with her friend Mary Crosby to talk about Mary's father's heritage. Nancy, who has over 1200 of Bing's tunes in her own personal collection, turned the spotlight on the man her own father called "the father of my career". An excellent 6-hour programme. **Jane Stoutenborough** reports more fully for us after this article. Suffice to say at this point that Mary Crosby came over very well indeed and it was a veritable feast of Bing's songs.

Arne Fogel continues to present "THE BING SHIFT" on Saturday nights at 7pm CST on KBEM-FM "JAZZ 88" (88.5 FM) in Minneapolis & St. Paul, MN. His show can be heard internationally, via the KBEM-JAZZ 88 website. Arne is playing many tracks from the Mosaic set on his program and he comments:

The Mosaic box-set is a dream come true, and a revelation, even to a 45+ year collector such as myself. The ballads, in particular, are sung with an intensity and commitment to be found in few, if any, other Crosby recordings of the (mid-50s) period. I'm playing them heavily on "THE BING SHIFT", and will continue to do so.

Greg Van Beek has been continuing to present his monthly Nostalgia Radio Time Specials on 1420am *The Breeze* and also, on December 21, Greg was live in the WTKM studios in Hartford, WI, hosting his 8th annual Bing Crosby Christmas Show. This year's show was dedicated to Tom Shanahan, who retired in September after an incredible 66 years in radio. New host Gene Roberts and Greg featured the best musical moments from the past 7 years on the "Oldies But Goodies" program, taken from archive tapes of the Club 60 Bing Crosby Christmas shows undertaken with Tom, 2002-2008.

Greg also told us about *The Chronological Crosby Christmas Special* broadcast on December 21 on the Pacifica Radio Network. This hour long special took a look at Bing's biggest Christmas hits from the 1930s through the 1970s and was hosted by pop historian Mark Emanuel from St. Louis, MO. Beginning on February 22, Mark Emanuel has been hosting *A Chronological Crosby* (nightly at 1:00 a.m. PT/4:00 a.m. ET). This is a 20 hour series in which are presented the top hits of Bing from the 1920s through the late 1970s. The first show covered the beginning of Bing's career, with recordings from 1926 through 1929. Greg Van Beek will also be heard throughout this new series which can be picked up on Shokus Internet Radio at www.shokusradio.com/index.html

TV highlights - UK

There's been almost a veritable feast of Bing films in the

UK since the last issue.

Alia Jesse James	TCM2
Here Come the Waves	Sky Movies Classics
High Society	Channel 5
Let's Make Love	Film 4
Road to Bali	Sky Movies Classics
Road to Morocco	Sky Movies Classics
Road to Utopia	Sky Movies Classics
Road to Zanzibar	Sky Movies Classics
The Greatest Show on Earth	Sky Movies Classics
The Road to Hong Kong	TCM
White Christmas	BBC2

Good to see the BBC returning to their custom of showing *White Christmas* on the great day itself.

BBC4 repeated a 1997 special called *Cardigans at Christmas* which looked at seasonal TV shows over the years. Naturally Bing featured in several places with an excerpt from the *White Christmas* film and from the Bing 'N' Bowie duet which was incorrectly labelled as being from 1982. Perry Como and Andy Williams received due attention as well.

Bert Bishop noticed a wartime feature on women's hair on BBC1's *The One Show* on November 26 which highlighted the need for women to be practical at work and yet look glamorous in the evening. The music played throughout this was Bing was singing 'Goodnight Sweetheart'.

UK radio

In December, it was very heart-warming to hear Bing popping up on all kinds of radio shows as his old Christmas favourites were played by presenters of all hues.

It's not often that BBC Radio3 features Bing, but on December 26, the *Jazz Library* programme focused on the jazz side of our Mr. Crosby. Singer Gwyneth Herbert joined Alyn Shipton to pick Bing's jazziest recordings, ranging from his Paul Whiteman days to the swing bands of Buddy Bregman and Billy May, and including Bing's immortal discs with Louis Armstrong. Starting with a brief extract from "White Christmas", we then heard:

Happy Feet - From Monday On - St. Louis Blues - Brother, Can You Spare a Dime? - Yes Indeed - Deep in the Heart of Texas - It's Been a Long, Long Time - After You've Gone (1946) - Now You Has Jazz - Last Night on the Back Porch - They All Laughed - Brazil (with Rosie) - Little Drummer Boy / Peace on Earth (with David Bowie)

Some interesting points were made by the knowledgeable presenters as they reviewed a selection of Bing's work in an excellent programme.

The ICC purchases a number of the Sepia *Through the Years* CDs for distribution to various radio presenters via Stan White and Maggie Ryan and it is very pleasing to note how well this is paying off in the form of regular plays.

The National Presenters (who have a potential audience of 60 million!)

Russell Davies celebrates the art, craft and

inspiration of the popular song with particular emphasis on the songwriters in his BBC Radio2 show on Sunday evenings and he regularly uses Bing songs to illustrate his theme. He made me smile when he played "On The 10:10 from Ten-Ten-Tennessee" (from the latest Sepia) and commented: "If you know who Bing's partner was, you must have compiled this album." It was, of course, Ben Lessy and I had compiled the album! I felt as though he was talking directly to me.



Bing and Ben Lessy sing about the train from Tennessee

Russell gave an excellent plug for the Mosaic set playing "Merci Beaucoup" and then "Shh! In Madrid". As Bing died in Madrid, Russell found it spooky that he should be singing about that city. No one is sure who wrote that particular song and Russell appealed for help if anyone knew the answer. Bing Crosby Enterprises had originally sought our assistance in this regard but we could not trace the writer although we thought it might have been written by Buddy Cole himself.

Clare Teal and then **David Jacobs** follow Russell on Sunday evenings, playing Bing on occasion, and making it a ideal 3-hour session of "our kind of music" to quote a phrase David often uses. **Desmond Carrington** on his Tuesday evening Radio2 show has been playing Bing a little more often of late with songs varying from "Wistful and Blue" (1926) to "Well, Did You Evah! (1956).

The local presenters

David Lowe who broadcasts in the West Country and is heard on seven BBC local radio stations from Gloucestershire to the Channel Islands is an excellent

broadcaster. Very well informed, he regularly uses tracks from the Jonzos and Sepias which ICC stalwart Maggie Ryan has supplied to him. David invariably gives recording dates, writers, orchestras and plays a splendid selection of Bing's work. He lost his Saturday night show "As Time Goes By" earlier this year but he still has his "Swingers & Singers" programme on Sunday evenings. In the four months covered by this issue, he treated us to 38 Crosby classics. Introducing "Say One for Me" he commented that it was the first time in 28 years he had played this. "Devil May Care" was requested by ICC member Len Hawkings on the anniversary of Bing's death and "That's How Much I Love You" was played for Maggie Ryan's 49th wedding anniversary and the ICC got a nice mention too. This last named track was another that David had never played before. "La Mer" was played for Maggie Ryan's daughter Samantha. David wins the *Bing on the Box* award this time around.

Anne Hopper at BBC Radio Cumbria missed a couple of weeks through illness and local floods but still managed to play 35 Bing tracks on her Sunday afternoon show during the 4-month period making her the runner-up to David Lowe. The songs played cover a wide variety and ranged from "Day by Day" to "Fatherly Advice" and to part of the Bing and Perry Como duet from a TV show. Anne needs requests to support her Bing choices so do please email her at anne.hopper@bbc.co.uk with Crosby songs you would like to hear. The show can be heard on the Internet of course. Anne tells me that of her top three male singers of the year - based on requests from listeners - Bing was number one, Perry Como number two, and Jerry Vale number three. Her top three female singers were, in order, Doris Day, Vera Lynn and Ella Fitzgerald.

Bill Rennells hosts *Harmony Nights* which is heard throughout the South East of England late on Sunday evenings. He came in with 24 tracks in the period under review, putting him in third place. *Harmony Nights* is a request show too and our members play their part in making sure that Bing is heard. Trevor Wagstaff was responsible for at least 5 songs, Stan White contributed another two with Bert Bishop chiming in with "Mele Kalikimaka".

Our old friend **Paul Barnes**, who broadcasts through seven BBC local radio stations, has continued to feature Bing regularly. He always mentions the BING calendar and plays the "song of the month." Paul played several tracks from the latest Sepia release during the period under review and latterly he has been excited about the Mosaic set featuring three tracks in a row on his show. Also "After You've Gone" (1946) was played for Bert Bishop's 82nd birthday and Bert had told Paul that the song was recorded on the day Bert joined the RAF at the age of 18.

Radio Lincolnshire's **Howard Leader** (www.bbc.co.uk/lincolnshire/local_radio/) has a Sunday afternoon show and he responds to the CDs provided to him by the ICC and Ernest Sutkowski (through Stan White) by playing a good selection of tracks. He was another to feature "On The 10:10 from Ten-Ten-Tennessee" from the latest Sepia CD.

Australia & New Zealand

Ron Field wrote with news of *Bing on the Box* in Australasia.

"In Australia on Christmas day on ABC/TV *Birth of the Blues* was shown. I brought my great niece in to see Bing in the film explaining that he is the man that is on the *Ichabod* DVD and the CD 'Jack Be Nimble'. I pointed Bing out and she said ... "I know who Bing Crosby is, he is on the CD." Boxing Day ABC/TV2 showed *Holiday Inn*. I didn't see it so I don't know if it was the colour version or the B & W."

So overall it's been a very successful period for Bing exposure all over the western world. Long may it continue!

Malcolm Macfarlane

Two Daughters Honor Their Legendary Fathers

The "Nancy for Frank" show on Sirius XM Satellite Radio dedicated two 4-hour shows to honor Bing Crosby. These extraordinary shows were hosted by Nancy Sinatra with special guest Mary Crosby.

Only recently have the two women, Mary Crosby and Nancy Sinatra, connected and they are fast becoming heart sisters. The two women, a generation apart have found much in common. Mary is the daughter of Bing and Nancy is the daughter of Frank. Nancy Sinatra is the host of a three-hour weekly show on Sirius XM Satellite Radio titled "Nancy for Frank." On Sunday January 3rd and January 10th she graciously dedicated two expanded shows to Bing Crosby and invited Mary Crosby to share in her reminiscences and reflections of Bing. Nancy has long been an admirer of Bing and shared with Mary and her listening audience her affection for Bing and his music. Mary who was born to Bing's second family in 1959 shared her reflections of her father and his music and her own treasured recollections of performing with Bing on his TV specials and eventually touring with him, her family and Rosemary Clooney in the 1970s.

The two extended shows were especially apt since Bing had welcomed Frank to his radio shows in the 1940's. They were rivals only in the minds of fans and the rivalry was embellished by the press. In reality, they respected and cared deeply for one another as corroborated by their daughters. Mary said she looked at the relationship of Bing and Frank as the "old lion and the young lion." The admiration the two men shared for one another was similar to Bing and Bob Hope's relationship. Mary confirmed her father's affection and respect for Louis Armstrong, and how Bing was instrumental in getting the first African American actor principal billing in a major movie (*Pennies from Heaven*). She also reflected on the special relationship shared by Bing and Rosemary Clooney. Mary said Rosie was truly Bing's "one girl friend" and to Bing she was just like one of the "guys."

The shows spanned Bing's awe-inspiring musical

career through radio, TV and records and included performances from when his career traversed with Frank's. All through the two shows, the Mosaic set; "The Bing Crosby CBS Radio Recordings 1954-1956" was spotlighted with the spinning of a number of selections. The shows included many duets with Bing and a variety of partners. Both Mary and Nancy commented on how generous Bing was to his duet partners. They played some of the same songs recorded by both Bing and Frank from different periods in their careers such as "The Moon Got in My Eyes" with Bing's recording from 1937 and Frank singing the same song from a 1965 recording. There were medleys from TV and radio shows, including the medley from the *Edsel Show* that encompassed 47 abbreviated songs sung by Bing, Frank and Rosemary Clooney and one song which included all and Louis Armstrong. They assembled songs together with common themes such as the sun or the moon. Throughout the shows, the two daughters conversed about the similarities as well as the different styles of their dads. Mary described her father as "an under the radar kind of guy" and thanked Nancy for shining the light on him.

Nancy had her favorite Crosby recordings, including "You Keep Coming Back Like a Song" and "Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day," as well as some of Bing's Hawaiian recordings. Mary loved all of her father's recordings and was amazed at how much material Bing covered, but admitted special feelings for his cowboy songs. She fondly reminisced about spending time at her dad's ranch. She told of how she shared her love of his cowboy songs with her boys and sang them to her boys when they were little. But like their mother, Mary's boys know their grandfather's recordings and seem to enjoy them all.

Each show ended with Bing's quiet and mellow Irish recordings including "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral, That's an Irish Lullaby" and a warm goodnight to Bing and Frank from two dedicated daughters.

In reviewing the two shows, it was clear that it must have been a monumental undertaking to put this project together. There were 71 songs highlighted on the first show, not including the 47 songs in one medley, and at least 75 songs featured on the second show. The majority of the recordings played were Bing's. Nancy Sinatra was a gracious and generous host to Bing's music and Mary Crosby. A heartfelt thank you goes out to her and all involved in putting these two shows together.

Mary was marvelous on the shows. Her affection and love for her father and her gratification at having a place to present Bing was unmistakable and shared by Nancy and their listeners.

I hope they will collaborate again and soon.

Jane Stoutenborough

(Bingcrosby.com and Sinatrafamily.com)

Once In A While

Personalities associated with Bing who have died since our last issue was prepared include:

Al Alberts, a founding member of the singing

group, The Four Aces, and a longtime TV talent show host in Philadelphia, died in November. He was 87. The Four Aces were an American male quartet and they amassed many gold records, including "Love is a Many-Splendoured Thing", "Three Coins in the Fountain", "Stranger in Paradise", "Tell Me Why", "It's No Sin" and "Perfidia". The group worked with Bing twice on his GE show in February 1954 singing "Heart of My Heart" and "Tell Me Why" with him. The original members, responsible for every song made popular by the group, included Al Alberts, Dave Mahoney, Lou Silvestri, and Rosario "Sod" Vaccaro. Alberts left the group in 1956 to try to make it as a soloist, but never made the charts. He went on to feature child singers and dancers on his "Al Alberts Showcase" for more than three decades in Philadelphia.

Yvonne King Burch, 89, who gained early fame as one of the singing King Sisters during the big band era before launching her entire extended musical clan into show business as the King Family, died on December 13 in a Santa Barbara, Calif., hospital where she was taken for injuries she suffered in a fall. One of the big band era's most popular and enduring vocal groups, the King Sisters—Donna, Yvonne, Luise and Alyce—were born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah. Taking their stage name from their father, vocal trainer Daddy King Driggs, the siblings initially teamed with their mother and a family friend as the Six King Sisters, first attracting attention while appearing with the Horace Heidt Band in 1935 and enjoying a three-year tenure on Heidt's radio series. The group's line-up shrank to a quartet as the decade wore on, and in 1939 the King Sisters joined a new band formed by Luise's husband, the legendary guitarist Alvino Rey. In addition to appearing on Rey's big hits "Nighty Night" and "I Said No," the sisters also had a number of successes under their own name, among them "The Hut Sut Song," and "It's Love-Love-Love."



Bing with the King Family - Yvonne is on the far left.

At the peak of their success, the King Sisters also appeared in a number of Hollywood features, including 1942's *Sing Your Worries Away*, 1944's *Meet the People* and 1945's *Cuban Pete*. During the post-war years their popularity declined, and throughout the 1950s they were

well outside the public eye. In 1965, however, the King Sisters—as well as members of their extended family, including Rey—were tapped by the ABC television network to host their own weekly variety show; it was an immediate hit. The King Family appeared on *The Hollywood Palace* working with Bing on five occasions before headlining their own TV special. The King Family Show continued its run until 1969, with the sisters easing into retirement during the decade to follow. Yvonne was the last survivor of the quartet.

Jake Hanna, a versatile drummer who played with Bing, Rosemary Clooney and such jazz figures as Woody Herman and was a longtime member of the band on Merv Griffin's television show, died on February 12. He was 78. John Edwin Hanna was born April 4, 1931, in Dorchester, Mass. He started playing drums as a teenager. Hanna was equally at home playing with big bands or small groups. He performed with Herman in 1957 and the early 1960s, then joined Griffin's band, in which he played until 1975. Hanna moved to the West Coast when the show relocated from New York to Los Angeles. He was part of the Joe Bushkin group supporting Bing at the Palladium in 1976 and 1977. Jake was house drummer for Concord Records for almost 20 years from 1975. In later life Hanna became celebrated among drummers for his use of a minimal kit – snare and bass drums, high-hat and one cymbal. These, he insisted, were all the tools a competent jazz drummer needed.

GORD ATKINSON'S 'THE CROSBY YEARS'

Gord's regular look at some of the many celebrities he has interviewed over the years who had a connection with Bing.

Victor Borge was that rarest of all performers, a unique entertainer who was a show business original. No one has ever combined comedy and music in the theatrical manner of the man the critics acclaimed as the "Great Dane". For over sixty years he brought joy and laughter to international audiences with his wit and piano artistry and was a treasured icon of the concert world. Each time I met with him he was a gracious and amusing host and a delightful star to interview.

"What I do on stage is what I do off stage," he once told me, "present myself the way I see situations and the way I react to them. Of course I didn't do any comedy during my years of concertizing. However, I always thought that the restrictions of the concert stage were artificial. I thought it was a shame that a great performer like Artur Rubinstein, who was blessed with a wonderful sense of humour, was not able to express his witty observations to his audiences or comment on his music. What I do is just a natural reaction to the formality of the stage and to life in general."

In 1941 the young Danish performer was hired to do the "warm up" on radio's most popular variety program, Bing Crosby's Kraft Music Hall. He soon became a member of the multi-talented radio cast. Bing recalled fondly those radio days during one of our interviews at his Hillsboro home.

"Oh, he was a find! I think he had done a show or

two with (Rudy) Vallee and the advertising agency wanted to get him on our show. That's when he was doing the phonetic spelling routine. He was such a hit that I think we had him on for 25 or 30 weeks. Every week he came up with some little vignette he could do. A very inventive, wonderful fellow; he became a big star later."

The unique and incomparable comedian/pianist was actually on the Kraft Music Hall for 54 weeks. "At that time", he told me, "I didn't speak much English. I had my comedy routines from Denmark translated into English. Of course, I hoped it was translated correctly, but had no way of proving it except for the reaction from the audience.

"I didn't speak much with Bing in the beginning because I couldn't understand English. However, when I began to speak English Bing's attitude was always the same, one of kindness and friendliness. There was always laughter from one week to the other. I was there for 54 weeks and I can't ever remember having a difference of opinion at those meetings. That was the beginning of my career in the United States and for that I owe everything to Bing Crosby."

A favourite Borge anecdote concerning Bing occurred with an overseas call and a case of mistaken identity. "A funny incident took place on the telephone with Bing and my wife, shortly after our arrival in Copenhagen for a homecoming engagement. Our hotel room telephone rang and the caller asked if I was there. She told him I was at rehearsal and asked who was calling. When he said it was Bing Crosby, she replied abruptly, 'Oh, yeah! Well, I'm Dorothy Lamour' – and hung up!"

In the years before the Second World War, Victor Borge was already an established pianist throughout Scandinavia. He turned to comedy one night, when he took the place of the star comic of a variety show who had suddenly fallen ill.

During the dark days of the rise of Hitler, the Borge brand of humour was a powerful weapon against the Nazi party, to such an extent that his well-being was at times in jeopardy. "Then I went to Sweden and took engagements in Stockholm, because I saw what was coming and wanted to prepare for the future."

Just prior to World War II, he arrived in New York on one of the last trans-Atlantic liners that left Europe for North America. The ship's passengers were American citizens and displaced persons. The US Consul-General in Stockholm, an early fan, gave a special permit to him to board the ship with this encouraging endorsement: "I hope you will make the American people laugh as much as my wife and I did at your performance."

His arrival in New York was as a refugee with limited funds and little command of the English language. "I took English grammar in school, but learned to speak the language by attending the movies. I would sit through a double bill at one of the cinemas on 42nd Street and stay as long as I wanted for just 15 cents. I would see the same scenes over and over again and was able to absorb the language and observe the way that audiences responded to the dialogue. In my room I would memorize the lines and react to them –

and in that way I broadened my English vocabulary.” It was from his early attempts at writing in English that he developed his hilarious punctuation comedy routine.

Away from his touring and international acclaim, the famous perennial performer was happiest when he and his wife, Sanna, entertained their five children and nine grandchildren.

He never lost his fascination with the world around him and was always energized by the laughter of his audiences. “What I do is universal. Anyone who knows anything about music recognizes that I am satirizing. I have always found that a smile is the shortest distance between people. And when you need to reach an audience a smile will achieve that goal.”



Gord interviews Victor Borge backstage in Ottawa at Canada's National Arts Centre in 1982.

I met with him for the last time during his June, 1995 sell-out engagement at Ottawa's National Arts Centre. “When you think of how often I have come to Ottawa and that people keep coming back to see me,” he said laughingly, “it pleases me to know that they continue to show such good taste.”

Victor Borge died in his sleep, December 23, 2000 at his Connecticut home. The gentle “non-melancholy Dane” would have turned 92 on the following January 3. He had just returned from Copenhagen, where his adoring fans embraced him once again as their most beloved native son.

Gord Atkinson

(Editor: Excerpts from Gord's interview with Victor Borge are included in the Prologue of his “Crosby Years” 14- part CD series – see Trading Post.)

Johnny Mercer – songwriter

Bob Achorn looks at the many links with Bing.

You can't tell the remarkable story of Johnny Mercer, the songwriter, without mentioning Bing Crosby. That became evident in the recent tributes to Mercer's songs on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

There were numerous salutes to Mercer's lyrics (1200 in all) and his occasional music. Two stood out.

One was a 90-minute film, “The Dream's on Me,” shown on the Turner Classic Movies channel, and released on two DVDs. The second was “The Complete Lyrics of Johnny Mercer,” a 462-page book published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York, for \$65.

Bing was visible in both. He could have legitimately been given even more attention than he received. They were contemporaries. Mercer was six years younger, and died in 1976, a year before Crosby. They shared a lot of popular music in 40 years. They shared history also: Mercer won work as a singer with Paul Whiteman's orchestra only a couple of years after Bing began phasing out Whiteman and his Rhythm Boys.

“The Dream's on Me” was a collaborative undertaking, with credit given to Turner Classic Movies, Mercer family members, Clint Eastwood and his Malpaso Productions, Warner Bros video and other interests. The copyright ownership was none of those, but rather the Johnny Mercer Foundation, which controls much of his output.

The introductory screen was “Clint Eastwood Presents.” He was billed as executive producer, and appeared from time to time, handling interviews with John Williams, the composer and conductor, and others in a tight-lipped way.

Crosby followers found familiar names in the credits. Ken Barnes, who produced CDs with Mercer and Crosby, separately and together, was credited as the writer. He made several effective onscreen appearances as one of the narrators. Four other participants were given lesser credit for writing.



“The Waiter, the Porter & the Upstairs Maid”.

Three widows—Kathryn Crosby, Robyn Astaire and Ginny Mancini—shared a screen of extra special thanks, presumably for the clips they allowed to be shown. Robert S. Bader, the man who recently put together the Mosaic 160 package of Bing's work, served as post-production consultant on the Mercer film.

As for Bing, he showed up early. There was a clip of Bing, Mary Martin and Jack Teagarden performing Mercer's music and lyrics for "The Waiter, the Porter and the Upstairs Maid," from the 1941 film, *Birth of the Blues*. That faded into "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening," the Mercer-Hoagy Carmichael song written for an earlier film but first heard in Frank Capra's *Here Comes the Groom* in 1951. The song won an Academy Award.

In a late-in-life spot, Bing praised Mercer and said he had known him for 45 years. That would put their acquaintance back to somewhere around 1933, the first year a Mercer song was sold for a movie, although it was cut from the final print.

It was also the year that Crosby, singing on his Woodbury Soap radio show, helped create Mercer's first hit, "Lazybones" (Mercer's preferred one-word title). Bing often sang it in later years, sometimes alone, sometimes with Louis Armstrong and sometimes with the Mills Brothers standing by. He didn't seem interested in recording it.

Later in the TCM Mercer anniversary show, Bing popped up again. In a theory Mercer often advanced over the years, he credited Bing with something new and important—his easy, natural, jazzy singing, a significant change in the stiff, formal way popular music was often treated up to that time.

Bing was first shown with the Rhythm Boys, in a spot from "King of Jazz." Then Paul Robeson came on singing the Kern-Hammerstein "Ol' Man River" in his measured, deep, emphatic tones (from the 1936 film of "Showboat.") That clip eased into Bing's voice. He picked up the tempo, offering "Ol' Man River" in the light, rapid manner he used for that song from his Whiteman recording in 1928 to television in 1976 (although at one point in midcareer, he slowed down and grew deadly serious about the song. At that point, he sang it Robeson-style, although not with Robeson's classical voice.)

Mercer also showed up thanking Bing for getting him started in Hollywood songwriting. At other times over the years, he had credited Bing with "saving" his movie career. In both instances, Mercer was recalling Bing's decision to include Mercer's "I'm an Old Cowhand" in *Rhythm on the Range*. A clip showed Crosby selling the song hard in a somewhat herky-jerky fashion.

Mercer wrote the scores for a couple of B movies in 1944 and 1945, and played a role in each film. He had also established himself as a buddy of Bing's, writing and performing for Crosby's Westwood Marching and

Chowder (and drinking) Club. But he couldn't seem to get steady work. After "Cowhand" Warner Bros. picked up Mercer as a staff lyricist. His Hollywood career took off.

Bing was there. In his formal studio days, he recorded at least 46 Mercer songs and went on to tape several of them multiple times. He sang them on the radio, in films and later on television.

"The Dream's on Me" obviously didn't want to linger on Mercer interpreters who are no longer with us—Crosby, Sinatra, Astaire and so on. It quickly turned to Tony Bennett, Cleo Laine, Michael Feinstein and other current singers. In 90 minutes, it included close to 60 Mercer songs, more often heard in bits and pieces, not full run-throughs.

The "Complete Lyrics" book suggests how more could have been said about Bing with Mercer. They recorded their first duet in 1938 and their last in 1974. Apart from their recordings, the Mercer-Crosby extended duet (lines from 41 songs, more than half by Mercer) on the Hollywood Palace in 1966 is a television classic. It would have given fascinating exposure to "Mercer style." But today's fast pacing didn't allow any such open block of time, and the performers were not current.

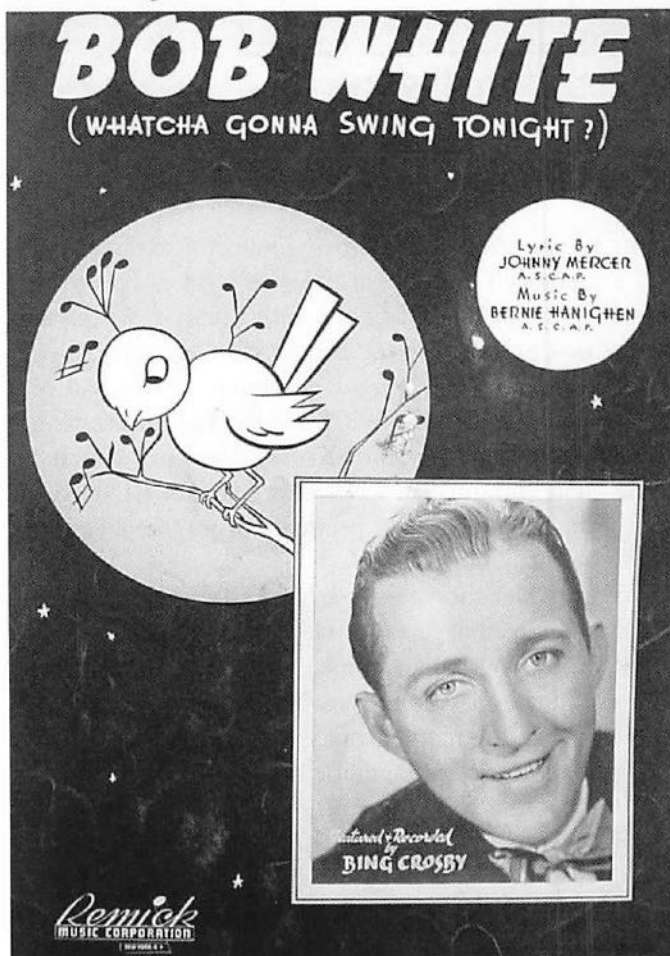
The Mercer songs were heard in other ways, including performances by Clint Eastwood's oldest child, a 40-year old son, Kyle, (on bass) and his youngest, a teenage daughter named Morgan, singing with limited impact.

Richard Kimball, the dedicated editor of "Complete Lyrics" books for several famous songwriters, is back for this one, with help from Miles Kreuger, Barry Day and Eric Davis. It's a stunning piece of work, revealing Mercer's extraordinary range and feeling, and his development into a sophisticated creator of sensitive and clever lyrics. He admired the work of W.S. Gilbert and Noel Coward, and it shows.

Crosby appears early in the volume for his No. 1 recordings of "I'm an Old Cowhand" "Too Marvelous for Words" "Bob White" "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby," "Mr. Meadowlark," Skylark," "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe," "Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive" and other Mercer hits. Mercer gave him special care. He wrote six new stanzas of "Glow Worm" for Bing, updating his earlier updating performed by the Mills Brothers.

Bing sometimes missed out on Mercer hits. "That Old Black Magic" became a standard, the most popular number in the Mercer-Harold Arlen score for *Star Spangled Rhythm*, a sort of Crosby film. But Paramount, perhaps underestimating the song, gave it to Johnnie Johnston. So, too, with "Hit the Road to Dreamland," a natural for Crosby but handled by Dick Powell and Mary Martin. Bing was left with "Old Glory," a patriotic epic that was a feeble imitation of the left-leaning "Ballad for Americans." Bing had surprisingly recorded "Ballad"

two years earlier. He handled it well, but it was Paul Robeson's special hit.



Bing caught up with "Black Magic" two years later in a curious way. In *Here Come the Waves*, he did an amusing impersonation of young Frank Sinatra warbling the number. But no recording of that went on the market at the time. Near the end of his life, Bing did cut recordings of "Black Magic." As for "Old Glory," it never did show up from Decca.

Mercer worked with 230 composers, matching his words to their music. Jimmy Van Heusen, a Crosby favorite, is on the list, along with Kern, Warren, Whiting, Aden, Mancini and so many more. It's interesting to note that in 1952 Mercer supplied the lyrics for two compositions by Al Rinker, Crosby's old vaudeville partner and (with Harry Barris and Bing) a member of Whiteman's Rhythm Boys trio in the 1920s.

The final Crosby-Mercer duets came in 1974, some

36 years after "Bob White" began them. Mercer had written lyrics for Andre Previn's music for a London musical, "Good Companions." As "Complete Lyrics" tells the story, Ken Barnes played some of the score for Bing. He was interested, saw possibilities in a couple of the songs and wanted to record them. So Mercer and Crosby gathered in Mercer's California recording studio and sang and pattered, with rhythm backing, the title song and "The Pleasure of Your Company."

Whether this was Bing looking for usable material or trying to help his old friend Johnny is not clear. In any case, with a London orchestra dubbed in, the sides went on the market and did fairly well, as did the musical. At one point in those last years, Mercer was apparently unhappy with Crosby, but that didn't destroy all their time together in the music world.

As an extra touch, "Complete Lyrics" includes many of Mercer's intricately-rhymed Christmas cards, with the Crosby family often mentioned.

The book isn't perfect. No such massive collection could be. Bing suffers in one instance. In "Mr. Crosby and Mr. Mercer," a couple of Bing's lines are printed this way:

"I prefer my music plain
"a la Schubert's 'Serenade'"

That doesn't rhyme or make sense. The word is "played," not "plain."

The book's "composer unknown" reference to "Cecelia" is puzzling. That was a giant popular hit. Mercer and Crosby each recorded it, as did many others. It was published in 1925 and became a standard. Bing didn't record it until 1962, and it was still well-known then. Dave Dreyer wrote the music and Herman Ruby the lyric. Mercer's connection? At some date, he seems to have written a second stanza suggesting the results if the singer lisped. A sort of joke, presumably.

Such exceptions simply indicate how extraordinary the Mercer history is.

Johnny Mercer had many showbusiness connections other than Bing Crosby, and Bing had many beyond Johnny. But they shared an affinity for good pop music. Together and apart they produced a lot of it over the decades. The Mercer anniversary brings much of that back.

Bob Achorn



KEEPING TRACK

Ken Crossland looks at the new releases



COMPACT DISCS

The Bing Crosby CBS Radio Recordings 1954-56

Mosaic Records

USA

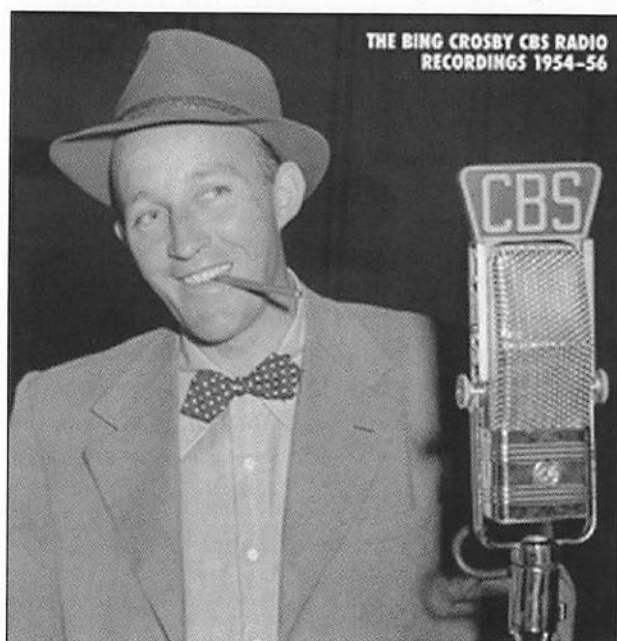
\$119

For track details, see BING 153

It's almost 30 years since I made my first trip to California to visit Al Sutton, Crosby collector extraordinaire and then editor of BINGANG. One of the first things that Al shared with me on that trip was a set of reel to reel tapes that had come his way from the recording engineer on a session that Bing had done with Buddy Cole in Palm Springs in 1954. Those recordings – outtakes and all – were my first exposure to the Bing's CBS sessions. A year or two later I found myself in regular correspondence with another US collector, Russ Rullman. Russ was part of a theatre group that rented some premises in Los Angeles that had once been used by CBS. Opening a long-sealed room in the basement, Russ came across a stack of original broadcast tapes of *The Bing Crosby Show*, for which the Palm Springs session, and others, had provided the material. Russ and I produced a series of articles for BINGANG, attempting to list the songs and their dates. I still have Russ's rudimentary computer printouts, from the days when laptops didn't exist and printouts came only on paper with perforations at both ends.

So began a fascination with Bing's legacy of Fifties recordings. Over the years, we have all come across new titles, and improved the quality of those that we already had, but the idea that one day, we would have chapter and verse on all the sessions plus 160 tracks available on a single set was no more than a pipe dream. But we now know that pipe dreams come true and as Bing sang in *Blue Skies*, "everything comes to those who wait."

The Mosaic set is to my mind, the single most significant release of Bing material since he passed away in 1977. Why do I say that? Well, for one, when we did ever get such a stash of new material that most of us had never heard before in any sound quality, leave alone the superb fidelity of the Mosaic CDs? Second, when did we ever get to hear Bing singing so free and easily, clearly enjoying himself, taking chances here and there, having fun and sounding great. And think of it another way. Many of us, myself included, have long lamented the fact that Bing's recording career followed a meandering path after the end of his Decca contract in 1954. Yes, there were some good records, but compared with the output of his peers in the 50s – Como at RCA, Sinatra and Martin at Capitol – Bing's



recorded output from 1955 almost until his death, had a mix 'n' match quality to it. How different would it seem if these tracks now released to us, had appeared over the course of the last five years of that decade. Think about the scale of it. 160 tracks; even after discounting those that appeared on *New Tricks* and *Some Fine Old Chestnuts*, we still have about a dozen or more 12-track LPs-worth of material. Allow yourself to think of the individual albums that they might have formed; there might have been a set of great American songbook themes; *More New Tricks*; *More Old Chestnuts*; perhaps a *Bing Sings The Hits of the 50s*. My point is that had these songs become available to us when they were recorded, they would have transformed what many of us have seen as the gradual withering away of Bing's recording career. That's how significant they are. Of course, not everyone is doing handsprings. Some think that \$17 per CD for material that has been sitting in the vaults for over 50 years is a bit a steep. Some say that in terms of preserving and promoting Bing's legacy, they are 30 years too late. Others point out that not

everything is new and that 14 have long been around in great fidelity on albums such as *New Tricks*

But these are minority voices. This a wonderful set, presented in an LP-size box, with seven individual CDs, in four cases. The accompanying booklet provides the details of how and why the recordings were made, and how they were rediscovered. The bulk of the text is provided by Gary Giddins, who puts them into their true historical context in such a way that Volume 2 of his biography of Bing just cannot come too soon.

Time Magazine described the recordings as "a master's lucid readings of the American songbook." The Mosaic site and that of other online retailers is brimming with praise. Many ICC members have singled out the 14 tracks on CD 6 that feature Bing with an augmented backing group. Tracks such as "Strike up the Band" and "The Object of

My Affection” have been around for many years but always with a thin, almost hollow sound. To hear them as they were recorded is simply majestic.

Commentators such as the BBC’s Russell Davies hailed the recordings as evidence of Bing’s pre-eminence as a “rhythm singer.” Indeed they are. The fact that the tracks are presented in chronological order means that we can hear Bing weave his way through every session, reliant only on his musical ear, his feel for the rhythm and his natural gifts. Yes, there is the odd glitch – “Young and Foolish”, a song that seems so suited to Bing, was recorded early in its session, with Bing seemingly not warmed up. It leaves you wishing they had done “just one more, Buddy,” although overall, such blemishes only add to the charm of the set. Anyone who enjoys Bing – especially Bing in the 50s - should not contemplate life without it.

Even better, if that’s possible is the prospect of more to come. This release wraps up most, but not all of Bing’s sessions with the Cole trio up to the end of 1956. Odd tracks such as “This Ole House” and some of the Latin numbers have been omitted, presumably because they did not match the “jazz” label attached to the set. But we may yet get them in future releases, along with the additional material recorded for later shows, from 1957 on. And if that were not enough, you will have already read elsewhere of the Crosby family’s announcement of further DVD and CD releases of rare material, including Bing’s seemingly mythical “On The Sentimental Side” album from 1962, which it seems, really does exist after all. More details elsewhere in this issue, but for now, it really is as good as having your “Captain working for you now.”

Voices: Bing Crosby The Gift of Music CDG1239 UK £9.99

1. I’ve Found a New Baby 2. Ol’ Man River (1955) 3. In a Little Spanish Town 4. The Blue Room 5. Jeepers Creepers 6. ‘Deed I Do 7. Nice Work If You Can Get It 8. They All Laughed 9. Heat Wave 10. Cheek to Cheek 11. Mountain Greenery 12. Seven Nights a Week 13. Some Sunny Day 14. I’m Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter 15. Exactly Like You 16. Along the Way to Waikiki 17. Mack the Knife 18. Down Among the Sheltering Palms 19. Dream a Little Dream of Me 20. Georgia on My Mind (1956)

A strange assortment of tracks, drawn from the years 1947 to 1957. There is some but not all of the Bregman and “Bing With A Beat” albums, plus the odd Decca track here and there. Stand out title in terms of rarity however is “Seven Nights a Week”, the closest that Bing perhaps ever came to a rock ‘n’ roll number, and the B-side of “Man on Fire” (how nice it would have been to have had that here as well). Available on line at www.thegiftofmusic.com/acatalog/ or by phone at 0844 248 9060.

Hooray for Hollywood! Jasmine Records JASBOX 23-4 (4-CD set) UK £17.99 (\$29.68)

I’m grateful to Wig Wiggins for drawing this compilation to my attention; here’s how he describes it.

“‘Hooray For Hollywood’ is stated to be a survey of music from films, radio and television of the 1950s (and some from the 1940s). It includes only three sides related to Bing; his Decca recording of “Just for You”, Jane Wyman’s solo on “Checkin’ My Heart” and their duet on “Zing a Little Zong”. The set includes “White Christmas”, “In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening” and “True Love”, BUT not by Bing!!! And the final topper, the compiler (my friend Robert Nickora) insisted on including Bing’s recording of “How Lovely Is Christmas”, even though I told him it has nothing to do with “Hollywood musicals”. But it’s there, referred to as from “Radio: The Bing Crosby Show”, which simply ain’t true. It’s a transfer from my American Kapp 45 single (K-196X) that was released separately from the Golden Record LP (number 1452 in my discography).”

Order online from www.jasmine-records.co.uk/index.html

Perhaps of more interest will be another Jasmine release, due out on March 12. Again, I’m grateful to Wig for this information.

“Jasmine will be releasing a new 2-CD set of recordings by Frank DeVol entitled “Portraits” compiled by fellow ICC member Robert Nickora. JASCD-538 will include songs by various artists including Margaret Whiting, Jo Stafford, Gordon MacRae and others. Most importantly for the ICC, the set also includes the four titles that Bing recorded for Columbia on March 25, 1959 with DeVol that were only issued as 45 singles: “Say One for Me”, “I Couldn’t Care Less”, “The Secret of Christmas” and “Just What I Wanted for Christmas”. These have never been reissued on a commercial CD and have been brilliantly remastered from the 45s in my personal Crosby collection.”

DVD

Road to Bali Amazon.com USA \$12.99

We probably have enough copies of the Road films to pass many a lonely winter on a desert island, but here’s another. This is manufactured to order by amazon.com in the States, where US residents can also view it online as part of Amazon’s video on demand service. The cover promises a “digitally remastered version”, but no-one has yet

posted a review to tell us whether there is marked difference from what we have had before.

Bob Hope on Television

Here's something that looks interesting. Greg Van Beek has already mentioned that www.bobontv.com/ offers an entire catalogue of Bob Hope on television, from his debut show in 1950 to his final appearance in 1996. Details of the organisation behind the DVDs are scanty to say the least, with a PO Box address in London all that we have to go on. The shows are not cheap either – starting price per show is \$24.95. Bing, of course, featured regularly on Hope's shows, and the listings also included Bob's tribute to Bing, a one-hour special from November 1977 that goes for \$34.95. The site claims that the DVDs are all from "broadcast masters" and that since they have never had a complaint about quality, "all sales are therefore final." Worth a look and if there is show you would like to have, probably worth a suck it and see!

What's on the Web?

As I write these notes, the annual AT&T golf tournament from Pebble Beach has just concluded. This is the successor event to the one established by Bing and known throughout his life and beyond as "The Bing Crosby Pro-Am". The event was always a rich source of memorabilia, with an annual Jim Bean whisky decanter taking pride of place. The programmes however were also very good and several of them turned up lately on a web site with the address <http://www.golfspast.com/pebble-beach-memorabilia.html>. It looks however as if the sellers use the same pricing guidelines as [bobontv.com](http://www.bobontv.com/)! The 1968 programme goes for \$75, whilst a 1951 tie clip sits at a cool \$750.

Happy listening!

ken@kencrossland.co.uk

<http://www.kencrossland.co.uk>

The Bing Crosby CBS Radio Recordings (1954-56)

Ken is not alone of course in his enthusiasm for the new Mosaic issue. There has been a tremendous response to this magnificent 7-CD set and here are a few of the comments.

For many years, in millions of homes, singer Bing Crosby ruled the airwaves. A large chunk of the US listened to his Kraft Music Hall on a weekly basis and as a result Crosby was able to dominate the music industry (and later the movie industry) without serious rivals. Aside from developing the template for radio programs,

his most notable accomplishment may have been the move from live programming to taped recordings. Understandably, after doing it for years, Crosby wanted to be free of the pressures of live radio performance (of which there was a West Coast and East Coast show, doubling the likelihood of on-air flubs.) But he also wanted to be able to record his show in advance—in other words, he wanted to be able to hit the links at Pebble Beach whenever he wanted. Crosby pioneered the use of tapes to prerecord his programs. This enabled him to keep his radio show going while pursuing other interests; in fact, he stayed loyal to radio long after many of his contemporaries had been permanently lured away by television.

Thus we have these recordings from 1954 to 1956, recorded for Crosby's CBS radio show. All were done over a few recording sessions under the direction of Buddy Cole, Crosby's long time musical director. The seven discs in this set are a whirlwind tour of popular music from the first part of the 20th century: some classics, some novelties, some hokey, some forgettable, all done with the crooner's ebullient charm and nonchalant delivery. All these recordings are filled with breezy swing and the relaxed air of people who know they can take another take if they need it. It's perhaps fitting, given the star's origins on radio, that these are among the freshest, most fun recordings he ever made and a lot better than the stuff he was putting out for Decca at the time.

Crosby had an uncanny ability to remember a large number of tunes and was able to nail almost every song in a couple of takes. Even then he was surprisingly prolific; it was not unusual for him to exceed the usual six songs per session to 17 or 18. He was in fine form vocally on these sessions, injecting the patter that he was known for in the form of jokes about movie studios and Bob Hope. However, a great deal of the success comes from Buddy Cole, Crosby's long time arranger. Cole was never a terrific musician in his own right—he recorded a few organ records under his own name that went nowhere—but he was a superb accompanist with a bouncy, lively style that incorporated elements of swing, boogie-woogie or whatever else the occasion called for. He could also move seamlessly between instruments, and it's common to hear him playing with one hand on the piano and the other on the organ.

The other players provide sturdy backing as well; in particular Vince Terri on guitar, who contributes tasteful chords and nimble solos. It's particularly satisfying to hear so many jazz breaks on these records and it clearly helps Crosby's credentials as a guy who was rooted in jazz when it was just popular music. Cole and Terri both get in their dues, and contribute the type of solos that session men are known for: always serviceable, never spectacular.

So what we have is a tour of some of the best and most popular songs over the past 30 years. Many of them

are standards (some freshly so), and some are novelty numbers from musicals that aren't pinnacles of songwriting, yet ones that Crosby knows he can pull off with his folksy delivery. Since they were all prerecorded, Crosby could replay more popular tunes again in subsequent shows. Only a few misfires exist. "Unchained Melody" is one of those songs in which the best-known version is so definitive, it sounds awful if anyone else does it. "My Funny Valentine" is too maudlin for Crosby, and there's absolutely no reason why anyone should use a harpsichord on any song (particularly the already hackneyed "Love and Marriage").

As befits a Mosaic set, the sound is absolutely superb; these tracks sound as if they were recorded for broadcast in 2010. Crosby knew that in order for the prerecorded idea to work, the quality of the tape needed degrees of fidelity and reliability to approximate live performance, and thanks to the Ampex company, he more than succeeded. The original tapes were obviously in pristine condition (small wonder as most hadn't been touched or heard in years) and the fastidiousness that Mosaic employs in putting out their product make these the best sounding Crosby recordings currently available. Also included in the packaging is a history of Crosby's relationship with the radio, as well as a discussion of some of the more interesting anecdotes about the material.

Despite the fact that he ruled the entertainment industry for years, Crosby has not received the hipness stamp that other crooners have. You can throw on any Rat Pack record at a party for an air of cool; put on Crosby and people will wonder when the retirement van will pull up. To be fair, Sinatra didn't record as much piffle as Crosby did, and thus his recordings will always be more swanky than corny. But if there's a benefit to this set it will be to establish Crosby as a guy who could swing with the best of them. Mosaic has done it again, creating a definitive set of recordings that deserved to be unearthed.

David Rickert, Allaboutjazz.com (January 25)

When contemporary culture acknowledges Bing Crosby at all, it is as a relic of ancient pop, his musical conservatism epitomized by "White Christmas." Happily, a new seven-disc Mosaic Records set reminds us that Crosby always swung without strain. In the mid-1950s, when he had apparently been eclipsed by Sinatra, then by Elvis, Crosby was still singing splendidly. The often high-level melodrama of his early records had given way to a masterful casualness.

The 160 tracks in this set were recorded on tape for his daily radio show and find Crosby fronting pianist Buddy Cole's easy-going jazz quartet (anchored by the peerless drummer Nick Fatool). Crosby's commercial recordings showed him attempting to appeal to every constituency (thanks to Decca's Jack Kapp), thus singing

hymns, cowboy songs, and forgettable pops.

Free at last to record what he liked, Crosby chose first-rate material: Rodgers, Warren, Duke, Waller, Berlin, Gershwin, Donaldson, Arlen, Youmans, Porter, a few Broadway standards. This set proves how much of a warm, unaffected jazz singer Crosby continued to be, subtly improvising on every track. A later session adds four hot horns to the quartet—including the swashbuckling trombonist Abe Lincoln—and places Crosby in the hip Dixieland ambiance he loved. Because of their intended audience, the performances will at first seem brief, and a dozen songs are beyond rescue. But Mosaic has again provided rare music in beautiful sound, with fine commentary from Crosby biographer Gary Giddins.

Mosaic sets are not meant to be listened to in a sitting, but these performances will help many listeners reevaluate their view of Crosby's jazz credentials. The music will also give pleasure long after the January sales have ended.

Michael Steinman, www.allaboutjazz.com

The Bing Crosby CBS Radio Recordings (1954-56), a seven-CD box set from Mosaic, consists of 160 songs originally transcribed by Crosby for broadcast on his radio shows of the Fifties, all of them accompanied not by a studio orchestra but by an exceedingly spiffy four-piece jazz combo led by Buddy Cole, one of the top studio pianists of the day.

Nowadays few people remember that in addition to being a consummate balladeer, Crosby was also one of the smoothest and most elegant jazz singers who ever lived. "Bing had the best time, the absolute best time," said the great jazz drummer Jake Hanna, who played with Crosby late in his life. "And I played with Count Basie, and that's great time." This set leaves no possible doubt of his urbane, unflappable swing. The superb liner notes are by Gary Giddins, whose two-volume biography of Crosby (the second installment of which will be published in 2012) promises to be definitive.

Terry Teachout, on his blog, December 8, 2009

...The pristine sound of these recordings is matched by Bing himself, who is in exceptionally fine voice. He gives each song its due, integrating modern lyrics into "I Can't Get Started" ("...Princess Kelly's had me to tea...") and "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans" ("They got angels right here on earth, wearing little blue jeans"), bringing sincerity to his reading of "Unchained Melody," or having a good time with the newly-minted "Love and Marriage," with Cole playing harpsichord as well as piano. On one disc Crosby is joined by some expert studio musicians for a round of Dixieland standards.

These 7 CDs offer hours of pure pleasure; Bing's mellow manner, with the simpatico backup of Buddy Cole, make for easy listening in the best sense of that

term. Gary Giddins' essay in the accompanying booklet is another asset; as we await the completion of his definitive Crosby biography, he reveals fascinating details of Bing's career at this point, and offers eloquent assessments of his efforts. The entire production, supervised by Robert Bader, is up to the usual high standards of Mosaic Records. I can't say enough good things about this marvelous collection.

Leonard Maltin's Movie Crazy blog

Bing Crosby was a multi-media superstar in his day, known for his work in film and TV and his audio recordings. He also had a daily show on CBS Radio. Mosaic Records' "The Bing Crosby CBS Radio Recordings (1954-56)" gathers 160 performances that feature the crooner primarily in the company of his quartet led by his longtime accompanist Buddy Cole.

Rife with tunes culled from the Great American Songbook, along with other assorted gems, this expansive look at Crosby's oeuvre is a treasure trove that showcases him as an assured yet understated vocalist of great prowess. This limited edition set is available exclusively through Mosaic at www.mosaicrecords.com.

James Lamperetta, The Saratogian, NY, December 18, 2009

BING CROSBY - *The CBS Radio Recordings 1954-56* (Mosaic). People tend to forget that in the '20s and early '30s, before Bing Crosby was the mellow crooner of "White Christmas" and other assorted pop pabulum, he was a remarkable and innovative singer of hot jazz. These mid '50s recordings—all 160 of them, 144 of which are previously unreleased—were made with a small jazz combo, and while he sounds pretty relaxed compared to his earlier recordings, Der Bingle's sense of rhythm is still razor sharp, and his way with a melody impeccable as always. And for fans who wish he'd recorded less ephemera during his heyday, a good chunk of these tunes are standards by the likes of Gershwin, Porter, Arlen, et al., that he'd never cut before, as well as some swinging takes on vintage jazz chestnuts.

Tony Sachs, The Huffington Post, December 16, 2009.

A set was sent to **Regis Philbin** and on the *Live! With Regis and Kathie* TV show on January 21, Regis held the set up and gave it a great plug.

Many members wrote to us praising the CD set too and we've picked just one letter as a representative of many.

Many thanks to you and the ICC for obtaining these sets at such good value and for the speedy dispatch. I

never expected to receive them so soon but what a lovely surprise and a great start to 2010.

I've listened to them all once and will listen to them over and over again during these gloomy winter days and for many years to come. They are a great way of relaxing after work. I must admit the first time of listening they brought a tear or two to my eyes both of happiness and sadness. Many of the songs I can hear my late father whistling and humming when I was a child as he dressed himself in his best Sunday suit ready to take us all out somewhere. He never did know all the words hence the whistling and I had no idea whose songs they were. So now when I listen to them on the Mosaic CD's the intimacy of the recordings brings both Bing and my dear old dad into the room. How's that for special effects? The quality of the recordings is outstanding and for me Bing is at his best. I always did like his collaborations with Buddy Cole; he seemed so comfortable as he wrapped his voice around the arrangements. This will be forever a treasured piece of my meagre collection and I will as always be indebted to those who made it happen.

Margaret Otway, Doncaster, England

The reactions on Bing's Facebook page were very positive as well.

Since there is limited musical backing throughout this amazing set you really sit up and listen to Bing's voice—and can't help but be awestruck by it. I've been a Crosby fan for many years, and own hundreds of his recordings on LP and CD, but never has his voice been so prominently featured, and never have I been so conscious of its incredible timbre. Plus, we're treated to Bing's unique interpretations of dozens of songs from the "Great American Songbook" that he never recorded commercially. This set is worth every penny.

Jon Oye, Waukegan, Illinois, USA

*There were many enthusiastic comments on the now defunct Bing Crosby Internet Museum too. First out of the traps was **Sally Monaghan**, of South Orange, New Jersey.*

I just wanted to let you know that I received my new CDs from Mosaic on Friday. They are incredible. Bing is in fantastic voice—just beautiful and mellow. As Louis Armstrong said—liquid gold being poured from a cup. I love the backing by the trio; it fits his voice just perfectly and allows him to explore a really jazzy sound. It sounds like Bing and they are having a lot of fun. The re-mastering is excellent. There are no pops, no scratches and no hollow sound. It could have been recorded today. I've only been able to listen the first four CDs, but they are truly a revelation.

On a superficial level, even the packaging is top notch. The presentation and the photographs are high quality and really reflect that period. The liner notes are

excellent, as well. I cannot say enough good things about this set. It is worth every penny and then some.

The comments continued.

My Mosaic set arrived today (pretty impressive that it made it halfway around the world to Australia to quickly), and like Sally, I too cannot say enough good things about this set. To hear 'new' Crosby recordings more than half a century after they were recorded (and in superb sound) is certainly worth the price of admission, but to hear Bing in such a laid back setting, recording the songs he wanted to sing in his own, inimitable style makes this set essential listening. Congratulations to Mosaic and the Crosby estate for coming together to release this set - may it be the first of many.

Neil B C, Australia

"Can't stop playin' those discs of mine!" (apologies to Ruth Etting). I am a happy man—and very enthusiastic about my receipt of this outstanding collection of seven discs from Mosaic! They just arrived yesterday, and I haven't stopped playing them yet (well I did go to bed at some point early this morning—but when I awakened they were playing again!). Listen, and you can hear Bing in the background sounding better than ever.

Here's the point: every good thing written on this board about this collection is true (if not understated).

Mosaic did a very professional job on the presentation: a large-format box with Bing's portrait on the front, and titled on the side in luminous silver letters against a black background (looks great on your library shelf). The seven CD's are intelligently presented in just four matching "jewel cases", each with a complete track listing on the back.

The large (coffee table) format booklet accompanying the discs is replete with a generous assortment of photos (most are never-before-seen candid shots) of Bing and his accompanying artists taken during the recording sessions. Documentation of each track is thorough, and as has been oft mentioned here—superb liner notes and contributions.

The fidelity and clarity is excellent—and the better your system, the better it will sound. It's truly a delightful experience to hear every nuance sparkling and clear. And, I reiterate the comments of the more knowledgeable contributors here—I have never heard Bing in better voice.

Perhaps more importantly, Bing is having fun here—and his relaxed happiness is contagious and mood-changing to the listening audience (that would be me)—I urge you to become part of that audience if at all possible. Here Bing is (in my opinion) truly in his element—a small combo, just as when he was with the Rhythm Boys (and also having fun), and free to

improvise (change lyrics, ad-lib, tease musicians, whistle, etc.) as the mood hit him along the way. Bing chose the songs and everything else. This is pure distilled Bing Crosby (I'll have a double—wait a minute—never mind a double—I've got seven!—outstanding CD's).

Thanks for allowing me to express an unqualified (but enthusiastic) endorsement.

Dennis Van Deventer, Lilburn, Georgia

Just received my package today. It was like Christmas, I couldn't wait to get home and listen to the recordings before putting them on my ipod - they have been played around the house all evening. I know a number of these songs received the big orchestra backing in the late 80s but there appears to be something just perfect to hear Bing singing naturally and with minimal musical backing - the music makes you focus on his voice and what a voice it is, no other singer comes close. A most welcome addition to any collection - I just hope there will be more in the future.

Frank, Ireland

...it's much better than I could have imagined from the tenth generation copies of tenth generation tapes that I have had for some years. Well worth the listen and the cost. Standout reactions - Bing's relaxed approach, the freshness and cohesion with the group, the variation in mood achieved with the same group - not nearly as "samey" as you might expect, but I do wish that there was a little bit less of Buddy's electronic organ. And of course none of the songs are rehashes of the hits from Bing's prime years, which itself gives additional freshness. (A few from very early years). One other comment - I think the notes are a little unfair about the orchestral overdubbings, which I personally thought were a triumph. Still, no matter - we now have two really different sounding tracks for each one of some of the songs.

Jarbie (J. Richard Baker, Kenilworth, England)

Just received mine yesterday. Wow is an understatement. These are incredible. The quality of the tracks is the best I have ever heard from a Crosby recording of any era. When you consider that itunes charges a buck a song it becomes very clear what a truly unique value this set is. Truly one of the top 5 Crosby releases of all time. And for those who already own 73 of these songs by way of Mr. Barnes and Mr. Moore, all I can say is these recordings seem totally different in scope. That's not a critique. I love the remastered versions. It's just these seem like completely different recordings.

lamplighter, USA

(Editor: And so say all of us! We may not always have agreed with everything said on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum in the past, but I am sure you will identify with

the words often wrongly attributed to Voltaire:

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.")

WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING - AN IRISH PARADE OF STARS

TJL Productions have recently announced that PBS will broadcast this special Irish program throughout March in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. The latest installment of PBS' popular "My Music" series presents a nostalgic journey back to the 1950s and 1960s featuring long-unseen footage of beloved entertainers singing some of the greatest songs from and inspired by Ireland. The program opens on the streets of Dublin with **legendary crooner Bing Crosby** offering a pair of Irish folk standards, "Molly Malone" and "McNamara's Band." Then Academy Award-nominated actor Robert Mitchum joins the Ames Brothers for a rare rendition of "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral (That's An Irish Lullaby)." Other highlights include classic performances from folk songbird Judy Collins, The Clancy Brothers & Tommy Makem, and Carmel Quinn, star of "The Arthur Godfrey Show." Plus, there is a memorable rendition of "It's A Great Day For The Irish" featuring Rosemary Clooney, Maureen O'Hara, Pat Rooney, and iconic TV host Ed Sullivan. The program concludes with a pair of more recent performances by "Ireland's Golden Tenor" Frank Patterson, who sings a stirring tale of Irish history, "The Fields Of Athenry," and the beautiful evergreen "Danny Boy."

Hosted by Academy Award-winning actress Patty Duke and written by celebrated actor and author Malachy McCourt, the program is a comforting reminder of the warm personalities and enduring sounds that have traveled from Ireland to America. Check local listings for stations and times.

(Editor: Looks like they have raided George O'Reilly's "A Little Bit of Irish" for the Bing content. Good to see Bing being featured in this way.)

Arizona inmates get annual earful of seasonal tunes

Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who runs the jails in Maricopa County, Ariz., plays holiday music for two weeks leading up to Christmas, for eight to ten hours a day. Inmates have called the practice a violation of civil rights, and 'cruel and unusual punishment.'

For two weeks a year, it almost seems as if Bing Crosby were the warden of the 8,000 inmates in seven jails in Maricopa County, Arizona. At least judging by the Christmas and holiday music which is piped over the public address system. The songfest begins at 7 a.m. and runs on repetition and without pause for eight to 10

hours — whether inmates like it or not.

"It's a nice touch for the inmates," Sheriff Joe Arpaio said Thursday. He's the man behind the three-year-old practice, which started this year on Dec. 14 and ends on Dec. 26. "They're away from their loved ones and it gives them some holiday cheer," he added.

And just as in malls across North America where ubiquitous holiday tunes descend from the rafters, not listening is not an option. But at least you can leave.

"It doesn't matter whether they like it or they don't like it," Arpaio said. "They're going to hear it. Unless they put toilet paper in their ears."

The songs include such traditional Christmas tunes as Winter Wonderland, Frosty the Snowman, Little Drummer Boy, Jingle Bells and, of course, Crosby's White Christmas, sung in both English and Spanish. There's also world music like the Nigerian song Betelehemu and songs from other religions, including Judaism and Islam.

Arpaio, who grew up listening to Christmas music, is partial to Feliz Navidad and Silent Night. "I like songs," he said.

Some inmates would beg to differ. In the past two years, six lawsuits have been filed against the county for playing Christmas music. Complaints have ranged from a violation of civil rights to "cruel and unusual punishment." As of Thursday, five lawsuits had been thrown out of court.

(Laura Stone, Canwest News Service, December 17, 2009)

(Editor: I'll take the cruel and unusual punishment of listening to Bing for 8 hours a day any time!)

Bing and Bob in San Diego

The December 09/January 10 issue of *JazFax*, the official publication of the Jazz Appreciation Society of Syracuse, New York contained a nice story about Bing and Bob Hope by Pat Carroll and we have been given permission to reproduce this here.

The November issue of *JazFax* had an article detailing the upcoming Mosaic release of the multi-CD Bing Crosby retrospective. Being on the Mosaic mailing list, I was aware of the boxed set and fully intend to put in an order. Bing Crosby has been a favorite of mine for over sixty years. I hope you will forgive me a little departure from the usual writings while I relate a family story that I was reminded of when I read the essay.

Ed, my oldest brother, was a musician (trumpet, piano and later Hammond organ) who was in his prime during the Swing Era, and he was a dedicated collector of Swing Era music. That collection included a large number of Bing Crosby 78RPM "singles." It was through constant exposure to the music and, with my

brother's prodding, that I became interested in jazz and in particular, I always loved Crosby's singing.

During the Second World War, Ed was in the submarine service of the US Navy and at one point was posted to a base in San Diego. Having a weekend pass, he thought he would like to play a round of golf (everyone in our family plays golf) and called a nearby club and asked if he could rent clubs and 'were servicemen welcomed?' The answer was affirmative, and he took a cab to the golf club which was outside the city.

What they had failed to tell him was that the course was closed that afternoon as a special exhibition match was scheduled. Dismayed over the turn of events, he made his way to the lounge for a 'cold one'. While sitting there a fellow came hurriedly into the bar and said to the bartender, "We found one for Hope but still need one for Crosby!"

Overhearing this, Ed immediately spoke up and asked if they were looking for a caddy. After a few questions, he assured the person that he played golf himself and indeed had caddy experience. Being in

uniform didn't hurt any, and he was enlisted, and of course, wound up caddying for Bing Crosby, playing an exhibition match with Bob Hope.

Obviously, a very singular thrill for a Crosby fan, but the best came following the match. Asked if he was heading into town and the base, he was offered a ride into San Diego, where he found himself sitting between Crosby and Hope who were on their way to a War Bond rally before driving back to LA.

He later loved telling that Hope was perpetually "on" and was genuinely a natural comedian/storyteller. Also, at one point during the drive, Crosby hummed and ad libbed some counterpoint to Deanna Durbin whose voice they heard singing over the car radio. But retelling the events, Ed always ended by remarking about the colorful locker-room language these stars used when they were out of hearing range of their 'public' – his point being there was nothing pretentious, just a couple of golfers relaxing after their round.

Pat Carroll

